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ABSTRACT

Case studies and seminar reports are provided that were presented at an international seminar to examine field experiences in using a culture-based approach to nonformal education. Part I, containing an introductory paper and nine case studies, focuses on indigenous institutions and processes in health, family planning, agriculture, basic education, and conscientization. The introductory paper discusses indigenous sociocultural forms as a basis for nonformal education and development. Seven countries are represented in the case studies: Indonesia, Bolivia, Java (Indonesia), Upper Volta, Botswana, India, and Bali (Indonesia). Section II focuses on the performing arts in both mass campaigns and community nonformal education programs. An introductory paper overviews folk media, popular theater, and conflicting strategies for social change in the third world. The seven case studies consider the specific strategies used in Brazil, Sierra Leone, China, India, Mexico, Jamaica, and Africa. Section III contains the seminar reports developed from discussions of the four regional working groups: Latin America, Africa and the Caribbean, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. A summary of plenary discussions is also provided. (YLB)

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TRADITION FOR DEVELOPMENT:

INDIGENOUS STRUCTURES AND FOLK MEDIA
IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Edited by

Ross Kidd & Nat Colletta

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Report and Papers from the International Seminar on:

The Use of Indigenous Social Structures and Traditional
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FOREWORD

Over the last decade there has been an increasing interest in traditional media (folk drama, music, puppetry, etc.) and indigenous social structures (organizations, roles and processes) as methods, organizing structures, and media for non-formal education. This growing interest is largely based on the conviction that development must be based on indigenous resources, indigenous solutions, and indigenous creativity.

Earlier international attempts to study this culture-based approach have focused more on the theoretical potential than on the actual practice; have concentrated primarily on folk arts and neglected the other institutions and processes of indigenous culture (e.g. social organization, leadership, collective action sturctures, etc.); and have failed to address the underlying political implications of this approach.

This volume is the outcome of a recent attempt to expand discussions in this field. A seminar was held in November 1980 in Berlin to examine field experiences in using this approach. A number of commissioned case studies and papers produced by seminar participants form the bulk of this text. The first section focuses on indigenous institutions and processes (in health, family planning, agriculture, basic education, and conscientization); the second on the performing arts (in both mass campaigns and community NFE programmes); and the third summarizes the seminar discussions.

Participants came to the seminar from all continents and from different working contexts. The group included practitioners and researchers, non-formal educators and development communicators, senior civil servants and grassroots workers. Unfortunately there were very few women (only eight out of the 38 participants) and no representatives from the Communist or Arab worlds. (However, one of the case studies focused on China.)

The mix of participants from "conventional" development agencies on one hand and popular movements, on the other, created an unintended, but highly productive, polarization among the participants. Two informal "camps" emerged and operated throughout the seminar. Those who identified with the "reformist/instrumentalist" camp were essentially looking for principles and tools for using indigenous culture within conventional development programmes. They agreed with some of the criticisms of development made by the second "camp", but viewed indigenous culture as a legitimate means for reforming current development strategies.

Those in the "popular education/structuralist" camp challenged the indigenous-culture-for-development idea. They felt it represented in practice a manipulation of people's culture to serve interests opposed to their development. They were skeptical about what could be achieved through this approach and were more interested in working with popular organizations and groups so that the latter could decide when and how to use "indigenous" or "popular" culture within an over-all strategy of overcoming oppressive structures.

This mix resulted in high quality, high energy debate. It was not a typical development seminar. Right from the beginning participants dispensed with conventional pleasantries and launched into an open and spirited critique of the underlying assumptions and basic ideas in this field. This, in turn, produced important challenges and clarifications of the "indigenous-culture-for-development" idea and extensive discussion of the "popular culture" alternative advanced by the Latin American participants.

At the end of the seminar there was no attempt to produce a set of global strategies to be uniformly applied. It was felt that work in this field should grow out of an understanding of each area's specific socio-political context. The seminar concluded with a note of caution and a number of questions and issues to be addressed by practitioners in the field.

We hope this collection of case studies and the seminar reports will help to deepen the theory, bring others into the debate and contribute to more reflective and committed work in this important field.

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We hope that this book will promote further cooperation and exchange among practitioners and organizations in this field, and promote a more critical assessment of both the creative potential and dangers in cultural strategies for social change in the Third World.

Nat Colletta Ross Kidd

TRADITION FOR CHANGE:
INDIGENOUS SOCIOCULTURAL FORMS AS A BASIS FOR NONFORMAL EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

by

Nat J. Colletta

INTRODUCTION

The processes of national culture formation on the one hand, and development on the other present a central problem of insuring cultural continuity and sociopsychological stability within the broader process of political and economic change.[1] The predominant 'development' strategy has been to promote economic growth at the expense of social development. This strategy often assumes that there are no viable institutions within the local environment and indigenous culture and that new ones must, therefore, be created. Furthermore, in the past development agents have assumed that peasant knowledge is backward, their economic behavior nonrational, and their values generally resistant to innovation. This perception has tended to reinforce the view that where indigenous institutions, roles, processes and technologies did exist, they acted as constraints on the development process. Development strategies based on these assumptions have typically been ethnocentric, discriminatory, and limited in impact over time.

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[1] The terms 'folk', 'traditional' and 'indigenous' culture are used interchangeably in this paper to refer to those cultures or aspects of cultures found primarily in peasant and rural people. Aspects of such cultures include face-to-face communication, an oral tradition, a strong sense of group solidarity, homogeneity, and a set of conventional ways and understandings (Redfield, 1974; Foster, 1953). Culture may be further defined as patterned behavior existing within any group whose members share meanings and symbols for communicating those meanings. These shared meanings are embedded in culturally symbolic systems - language, dress, and art - and are functionally manifested through political, economic, religious and social institutions (structures). The patterned behaviors (customs) are the link between cultural structures and functions as they are symbolically communicated.

Development can best be described as a process of positive socioeconomic change in the quality and level of human existence which is aimed at raising the standard of living, quality of life, and human dignity.

More recently, social scientists have assailed these past beliefs about peasants with evidence demonstrating that: traditional knowledge and technology is usually much better suited to local ecological, socioeconomic, and political conditions; peasants make internally rational decisions about the use of productive assets, the organization of labor, marketing, savings and investment; agricultural experimentation and willingness to take risks are not uncommon among peasants; and peasant societies are not static when given access to new information and ideas (Hoben, 1978).

To date, economists have dominated the development scene. They have, in general, focused on structural changes such as increased financial opportunities and incentives, assuming that externally defined rational reactions to such interventions would result in appropriate behavioral change. Conversely, social scientists (especially educators) have tended to focus on changing the underlying values and beliefs as a prerequisite to the adoption of innovations and the resultant behavioral change.

Rather than the preceding either/or dichotomy, conditions of behavioral change can be placed along a continuum. At one end, there are situations where appropriate behavioral change can be instigated through structural transformation (by improving access to information, credit, and other services; by changing such institutional arrangements as land tenure; and by providing incentives as wages or other reward systems) within the existing cultural framework. At the other end of the continuum, are those situations which require that social values be changed (through educational and training programs, adult resocialization activities, and other means) before structural transformations can affect change in human behavior toward internally defined development goals. In the middle of the continuum are those situations where interaction and complementarity between structural and culture change strategies exist.

The middle range of the change continuum is particularly important for development because neither of the above extreme approaches is sufficient; the lag between structural and cultural change, or vice versa, may lead only to short term gains. In order to insure that behavioral change is sustained, cultural and structural changes would be mutually supportive. Designers of development programs need to conceptualize interventions from a "holistic" framework, using the community, rather than the individual, as the prime unit of intervention. This includes understanding traditional values, indigenous roles and leadership patterns, local organizations and other informal associations, and the flow of influence and information between these elements as well as the linkages between these subsystems and other social systems. To close the gap between structural and cultural change, local culture - values, roles, institutions, and processes - can be adapted and modified to gain the consensual base necessary for sustained socioeconomic development. Unless development strategies build on existing ecological, sociocultural, and techno-economic systems which represent effective ways of controlling access to productive assets, organization of production, risk aversion, and capital formation sustained development is unlikely.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

In many previous development programs, the necessity to take culture into account may have been underestimated (thus the confusion between the above two poles). Cultural factors have often been considered very difficult or too abstract to measure, and so they have been largely ignored in development programs. While structural change is important, culture may be particularly critical in non-formal educational development programs, where the benefits of structural changes may be neither highly visible nor immediate. In some cases the existing culture, particularly some of its value orientations, is viewed as a constraint on the ability of the poor to take advantage of new conditions. While it has been shown that education, or the (re)socialization of appropriate behavioral predispositions, may play a critical role in bringing about other structural changes (nutrition education for dietary change), in other areas, traditional values may form the basis for introducing change (communal values toward shared labor).

All too often culture is seen as a bulwark of conservatism rather than recognized as a tool for positive change. While anthropologists have documented the conflict between development and culture, they have been less helpful in applying anthropological principles to discover the positive relationships between them. Anthropologists should be at the forefront of development by leading the discovery of how long-established cultural pathways of interaction, established roles, institutions, and value-incentive systems might be employed as levers for positive change. The study of culture as an object for intellectual curiosity versus its use as a viable process for enhancing human survival must be balanced.

In this structural-functional framework, existing cultural structures can be identified and used to carry development messages and mobilized to encourage mass participation in the development process through the sensitive modification and adaptation of their multiple functions. In this manner, culture can be used as a foundation for, rather than as a barrier to, change.

The premise underlying such a strategy is that culture is a living entity. To survive it must not only functionally adapt to changing conditions but it must also be at the vanguard of such change. In discussing missing variables in diffusion research and innovation strategies, Byrnes (1968) lists "utilization of the traditional culture" among the four "influence sets" within the innovator category which rank highest in correlation with development processes.

INDIGENOUS SOCIOCULTURAL FORMS AS A BASIS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Early development efforts which concentrated on the manipulation of macro-economic variables, such as investment rates, did not always induce behavioral change in, or even reach, the poorest segments of the population.

These efforts often failed to meet stated objectives or provide anticipated benefits because they did not effectively work within, or build upon, existing conditions and indigenous cultural patterns which are culturally embedded forms of "risk insurance", e.g., local associations, for the poor. In fact, development theorists often did not recognize that indigenous institutions and organizations existed at all, much less that they could provide important resources for the successful adoption of introduced change.

This "empty vessels fallacy" often caused development administrators to overlook the potential of using traditional or indigenous forms of social/cultural organizations in their development programs. However, analysis of how change is introduced into existing social systems and settings has demonstrated that ignoring the influence of, or failing to use, indigenous cultural patterns and local environmental settings may lead to the rejection and consequent failure of development programs. For example, in their content analysis of over 200 case studies of village development programs, Niehoff and Anderson (1964) found that many failures resulted from the fact that planners and implementers did not become aware of indigenous factors until they acted as barriers to the acceptance of an introduced innovation. When this occurred, planners often saw traditional culture as a negative force which had to be uprooted and replaced before meaningful development could occur.

When a new institutional service is provided to people in a developing nation, it usually replaces and/or supplements a previously existing form. When the existing form is treated as if it were nonexistent, the indigenous leaders responsible for that previous form are likely to view the new institutional form as threatening and resist it. An illustration of the importance of utilizing traditional leadership roles in development programs is provided by Niehoff's (1964) study of the introduction of deep wells in Laotian villages. When the village well was drilled on wat grounds, the Buddhist monks took responsibility for its maintenance; otherwise, the wells were broken and unused within a year because of the lack of a local social organization to support the innovation. This illustration suggests that traditional leadership roles are one aspect of indigenous culture which could be utilized by development officials.

Many who have taken up the banner of culturally rooted development strategies have focused on the use of folk arts as a medium for development. However, the entire range of folk culture can form the accessible building blocks for improving the human condition. These forms may include indigenous models of socioeconomic organization, through legal-political systems and patterns of leadership and consensus, to local material technologies and associated artisan roles, folk art, and dramatic forms.

In terms of development programs, any indigenous social/cultural element may be classified as positive, neutral, or negative. Some indigenous forms offer a means by which technological innovations may be introduced to a user system with greater success because the traditional element aids people in viewing new ideas within the context of their traditions.

As an example of this process, several national family planning programs in Asian nations (e.g. India and Pakistan) in the 1960's at first ignored traditional birth attendants. Because of this perceived slight, these midwives resisted family planning and often started negative rumors about the modern contraceptive methods that were being introduced. On the other hand, during the 1970's, national family programs in Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia began to work through the traditional system of birth-attendants. By providing training, recognition, and in some cases, financial incentives to reward the traditional midwives for their family planning efforts, an important contribution toward the success of these family planning programs especially in rural areas and with the urban poor, resulted. The general lesson derived from these experiences is that it is better to use traditional leaders in development programs than to ignore them and incur their active resistance.

In some cases, a particular social/cultural form does not affect the performance of a development program one way or another. It is neutral in the introduction of a technological innovation. For example, almost every traditional culture has a "hot-cold" classification of all foods and drinks (this taxonomy has nothing to do with the actual temperature of the food at the time of its consumption). Research and development program experience has shown that in most cases, the hot-cold complex in an indigenous culture does not affect the acceptance or rejection of nutritional food supplement.

Certain types of indigenous social/cultural forms can be harmful or have negative consequences; these must be altered substantially or replaced by human resource development programs. An example is the food taboos for pregnant women found in many cultures. In Malawi, this taboo prohibits pregnant women from eating meat, sugar, or milk because it is feared that consuming these foods will transfer animal traits to the child (Safilios-Rothschild, 1980). At the time when pregnant women most need these protein-rich foods, these taboos prevent their consumption.

The unsanitary methods of birth-delivery utilized by traditional midwives, such as cutting the umbilical cord of the newborn with a sharpened thumbnail or a rusty razor blade, could be viewed as a negative indigenous form. However, experience in several Asian nations has shown that when traditional midwives are trained in more sanitary methods of delivery, they usually change their procedures (Rogers and Solomon, 1975).

The central thesis of this paper is that a culture-based nonformal education development strategy enables new knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be introduced within the framework of existing knowledge, cultural patterns, institutions, values, and human resources. That the indigenous culture is the fabric within which development can best be woven is based upon three assumptions: indigenous elements have traditional legitimacy for participants in development programs; there elements contain symbols that express and identify various valid perceptions of reality; and they serve multiple functions - they can involve, entertain, instruct and inform.

The ensuing pages discuss the following indigenous social/cultural forms: (i) traditional leadership and functional roles, (ii) traditional communication systems, (iii) indigenous organizational forms, (iv) indigenous socio-economic processes, (v) indigenous knowledge systems, (vi) traditional etiology, and belief systems; and (vii) indigenous technologies.

Traditional Leadership and Other Functional Roles[2]

The nature of irrigated farming requires a certain degree of local social organization. There must be some means of making decisions about the priority of who will receive irrigation water; these decisions must be implemented by some type of leader who is respected and trusted by his neighbors; and certain individuals must be responsible for maintaining the irrigation facilities. On the basis of his research in Laos, Coward (1975) concluded that the indigenous leadership roles among farmers with previous irrigation experience can form an important linkage between users and government officials who are responsible for the introduction of a centrally-administered irrigation project. Often in the past, however, when a large-scale irrigation project is mounted in a local area, the existing indigenous social organization has been ignored, usually to the detriment of the new irrigation project. Deuwal and Sartono's (1980) recent work on Java in this text reinforces the important organizational role that indigenous water user associations and the traditional role of ulu ulu (water manager) play in irrigation development, operation and maintenance.

In another case, the use of traditional religious leadership in a hookworm treatment campaign in Ceylon made the critical difference between success and failure. After months of user resistance, Buddhist priests, Muslim

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[2] Traditional leadership is used here to mean that informal, nonelected leadership which emerges from indigenous organizations in contrast to modern leadership which is typically associated with an induced form of governance and bureaucratic administration.

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leaders, and folk-healers were recognized and enlisted in the campaign. This led to its ultimate legitimization because users accepted treatment upon their recommendation (Phillips, 1955). Today, in what is now Sri Lanka, Buddhist priests are being recruited and trained as community organizers and facilitators of village development efforts among the poor. Here the emphasis is on reaffirming their traditional role as managers of water resources in an effort to rehabilitate Sri Lanka's ancient tank system of irrigation (Hewage, 1976).

As further illustrated in this volume in Khayam's study of the pesantren, an Islamic institution concerned with community development has become an instrument of nonformal education and rural development in contemporary Java.

The contribution of indigenous leadership roles to development programs seems to be especially important among the client audiences that are the most traditional, the least educated, and the lowest in income. An important reason for the success of the rural health program in the People's Republic of China during the 1970's was the role of "barefoot doctors", para-professional health workers who served their peers in production brigades. As many as one-third of these doctors had been traditional health providers. In fact today all barefoot doctors in China practice a unique combination of traditional (Chinese) and scientific (Western) medicine. This integration of indigenous and modern medicine in China is one reason for the rapid acceptance of the barefoot doctor-based health system in rural areas, especially by the poorest peasants. (Rogers and Chen, 1979)

Other examples of the use of traditional leadership come to mind. In Indonesia, traditional midwives, or Dukun, now perform a related task of spreading family planning messages to rural peoples (Muncie, 1972). The distribution of condoms and other family planning devices have become part of traditional commercial systems like herbal medicine distribution networks, the jamu (Piet and Hendrata, 1974). Informal religious leaders and clan societies are helping to disseminate agricultural information in Sumatra (Esmara, 1974).

As Ranganath (1980) demonstrates in his article, there are numerous traditional roles such as those of barber, toddy dealer, and money changer, which can potentially be mobilized for nonformal education programs.

However, although informal leaders and other important community functionaries may be an effective communication channel to the masses, they often lack the technical knowledge and content necessary for development. This suggests the need for a close connection between the technical expertise of government development agents and the communication skills of indigenous resource persons. This could come about through joint training, workshops, or other activities which provide a climate for mutual understanding and cooperation toward common development objectives.

Traditional Communication Systems

Long before modern mass media, including radio, print, film and television, began to penetrate villages and urban poor audiences, indigenous communication systems existed. These included community information and warning systems such as balladeers, town-criers, gongs, and drums; and traditional entertainment such as puppet shows, song-and-dance teams, and shadow theatre. In Indonesia traditional drama such as the Wayang (shawdow puppets) and the Ludruk (folk theatre), was used in the independence struggle as a means of rallying villagers, and is now being used to carry messages of health care, family planning, and child care (Crawford and Adhikarya, 1972; Peacock, 1968). In Bali the traditional clowns of the masked Topeng typically incorporate contemporary issues, such as the potential effects of tourism on the culture, into their performances thus serving to educate while entertaining (Jenkins, 1980). The second section of this book will deal with the performing arts as media for non-formal education.

In each village or community throughout the developing countries, there are indigenous forums of social exchange. Political debates, exchanges of ideas and information, and other related activities take place in traditional gathering-places like small village restaurants, market squares, barber shops, traditional community culture centers, and around churches, mosques, temples and other religious compounds which serve as centers of interest to many villagers. These forums of social exchange could profitably be used to serve other development functions or incorporated into development efforts.

If ignored, such indigenous communication systems can transmit messages which oppose and undermine development programs. For example, in India, Pakistan, and Indonesia, such traditional communication channels have, in the past, frequently carried negative rumors about the side-effects of family planning methods, sometimes leading to the outright rejection of the contraceptives being introduced.

On a more positive note, in many developing nations, messages on such contemporary topics as agricultural techniques, modern health practices, and family planning are reaching rural people through traditional communication systems. The forms vary from nation to nation but the strategy is similar: adapt development information to the forms that have been accepted in rural villages for generations. In this manner, culture becomes a foundation for, rather than a barrier to, change.

Modern media such as print can readily be interfaced with indigenous modes of political and economic organization as a basis for development. In Mali, the rural newspaper Kibaru in the Bambara language is a means of expression and communication for neoliterates through its link with traditional political structures. Each village chief had (and still has in most cases) his spokesman, consequently each group of neoliterates chooses its own communicator who remains in constant contact with the editing team of the Kibaru. As a result, an important part of the paper is made up by contributions from its own readers who quite naturally send in traditional tales, riddles, and proverbs. Thus, the rural paper becomes a means of mutual education using and enlarging the traditional role of village assemblies (Brunswic, 1975).

Indigenous Organizational Forms

Indigenous organizational forms can be implementing mechanisms for certain development programs. These intermediate or "middle rung" institutions which have grown up within the peasant social structure can provide viable links between the past and the future; the central government and the village; the donor agency and the user group. They are mediating institutions which are familiar and acceptable within the traditional system, yet they can serve as educational and distributional mechanisms for development programs. This is not to say that existing institutions are immutable or should not be changed, rather it is to acknowledge that such organizations persist because they are legitimate, proven ways of organizing peasants interests and meeting their needs. New organizational forms will be accepted to the degree that they can better serve such functions.

In a recent African conference on training rural development workers, participants spent considerable time discussing a variety of traditional organizational and institutional resources such as the Gokonolona in Madagascar, the clan and other collective or communal forms, and processes of organized socioeconimic life. They called for those working in rural development in Africa to learn about, and from, these traditional forms in order to treat them as a potential resource base for development (FFHC/AD Workshop, 1977).

In providing an excellent example of how traditional organizational forms are being utilized for development purposes, Peel (1976) states that:

> An organizational form, distinctive of a particular culture may be important less as an end in itself than as a convenient means for attaining some more universalist goal - but a means which, coming to shape a new emergent order, is not just a means. Thus the Senegalese economy today is permeated by the operations of the gated, it is true, but mostly only from an interest in their role as legitimating charters (significantly, a viewpoint which reduces them to being the effect of structural pressures). Other aspects of culture-social roles, moral preferences, cosmological ideas, the local distribution of power and resources so far as these are culturally shaped - have all been looked at for their bearing on development. But if people are to be regarded as the subjects, rather than the objects, of development processes, any proposals for their future must be adequately related to what they perceive of their past.

These institutions can take many organisational forms: self-help groups, village assemblies, or death aid societies. The rotating credit associations which are found in many developing countries, especially among rural peasants and urban villagers, are such an institution./3

Rotating credit institutions basically help members build up a sizeable sum with which they can make larger purchases than would otherwise be possible. Geertz (1962) argued that the rotating credit association is also an educational mechanism through which peasants learn to be traders and hold modern monetary values. Ardener (1953) found that the Mba-ise, an Ibo group of Nigeria, have made the transition from a mainly agricultural to a predominantly trading economy successfully due, to a large extent, to the growth and development of rotating credit associations. In addition, the group's increased sense of economic calculation is accompanied by more diffuse social, solidarity-providing aspects of the institution: when a member is sick, he is visited in the hospital; if he dies, his family is given a contribution towards the cost of his funeral.

Rotating credit associations also reflect a movement toward an increased segregation of economic activities from noneconomic ones while maintaining the dominance of traditional values over developing economic activities. According to Geertz (1962), the associations are, in many cases able to

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/3 There are many terms used for rotating credit associations: contribution clubs, slates, mutual lending societies, pooling clubs, thrift groups, friendly societies, among others. Although they vary in their duration, membership composition, size, and degree of sophistication, the basic principle upon which they are founded is the same: a lump sum fund composed of fixed contributions from each association member is distributed to one individual at each of its regular meetings.

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balance these contradictory forces in such a way that some disturbances of social equilibrium are avoided even in situations of fairly rapid social change.

The rotating credit institutions have shown that it is possible to integrate traditional attitudes with modern functions in such a way that the former supports, rather than hinders, the latter. It can be argued that it is this pattern of integrating modern economic functions with the indigenous social structure and values that could help sustain development in many poor countries.

Exactly how rotating credit associations might be functionally utilized in human resource development programs can best be illustrated by kaes in Korea. In most Korean villages, the kaes were practically the only existing organizational form in which women were allowed to participate. In 1968, Government family planning workers converted the kaes to 18,000 mothers' clubs and connected them to the national family planning movement (Rogers and Kincaid, in press). Through the kaes monthly meetings township family planning workers could reach large numbers of eligible women to distribute oral contraceptive supplies, to discuss family planning methods and their possible side-effects, and to counteract negative rumors about contraceptives. Not surprising, the kaes/mothers' clubs continued their money-raising functions, but these capital-accumulation functions were channeled into community development activities, including greater female equality. In addition, when the Saemoul Undong (new village movement) was initiated as a national rural development program in the 1970's, the mothers' clubs often took the lead in mobilizing community action for improved housing, better nutrition, and increased agricultural productivity.

In Korea, as in some other nations, rotating credit associations provided an existing organizational form onto which a government-directed self-help movement could be grafted. Where such rotating credit associations are not strong, as is generally the case in Latin America, there may be other indigenous organizational forms which could serve a similar function.

The rotating credit association is merely one of many such intermediate "socializing" institutions which spring up in societies undergoing social and cultural change. There are many others not only in economic but also in political, religious and other spheres of the social system. This family of mediating institutions, roles, and processes should be a critical object of study and use in development programs.

Changing the functional balance of traditional institutions from social/expressive to technical/instrumental is important for the use of such institutions in economic endeavors. The latent strength of traditional groups is their power to socialize or their ability to teach new behaviors in traditional structures. The traditional structures themselves are ultimately transformed and thus inadvertently facilitate social change. The simplicity and readily mobilized nature of existing associations and networks may substantially reduce the administrative costs and bureaucratization of the poor often associated with the formation and expansion of development delivery systems. (Esman and Montgomery, 1980).

However, there are limitations to the scale and complexity of activities which such a nonformal education delivery can support. At some point increasing legal and economic complexity, e.g. contracts, record-keeping, management, etc., will necessitate the replacement of these traditional associations by banks, cooperatives, and the like. However, self-sustaining cultural change takes place in gradual steps. In the transitional stages, traditional associations can perform the valuable function of forming a bridge between traditional and modern economic values, meanings, and activities in a harmonious, evolutionary manner. The building of "middle rungs" between traditional society and more modern forms of social organization seems to be a characteristic activity of people caught up in the processes of social transformation (Geertz, 1962). As Wharton (1969) observed, such institutions are maintained as one form of "risk insurance" for the poor in the broader social change process; they should be recognized as such and be treated as complementary to any new insurance system whenever possible. Peter Marris (1974) refers to this approach as the "traditionality of modernity". That is, even where radically new forms are introduced, the old forms need to continue in the interim to allow individuals to see the "structure of oppositions" in exploring and adapting new forms.

When this evolutionary process does not occur, destruction or termination of indigenous institutions without adequate replacement is especially disruptive for the poor who are usually the most dependent upon indigenous institutions. For example, national ministries of health in several Asian and Latin American nations have tried to outlaw traditional birth-attendants and indigenous healers, without providing a primary health system of doctors, nurses, and clinics that offered equivalent access and coverage. Similarly, land reform led to the disappearance of both sharecropping and the landlords' sense of personal responsibility for the welfare of peasant farmers in Turkish villages. In this case, the poor suffered because equivalent socioeconomic security systems could not be provided (Kiray, 1968). Further, although national family planning programs have tried to persuade eligible couples that having several male children is no longer necessary as a means of old-age security for the parents, the national government's social security program has not been able to assume the function previously provided by male children.

Perhaps the most noted illustration of utilizing indigenous social organization as a mechanism for motivating behavior change as part of a development program has occurred in the Indonesian Province of Bali. Here, the traditional form of community structure called banjar has been harnessed by Indonesian development officials for the promotion of family planning.

Organized local groups also play an especially important role in political education, agricultural development, public health, and family (or "birth") planning in the People's Republic of China. Almost every adult belongs to a "study group" of 10 to 20 members, led by a trained leader. At the weekly meetings of these study groups, the members are informed of political events and development activities; through study, discussion, and criticism, the members' behavior is changed. Such study groups have played an especially crucial role in changing contraceptive and fertility behavior in rural areas during the 1970's, so that today China may have one of the most successful family planning programs in the developing world (Rogers and Chen, 1979).

What can we conclude about local social organizations and development? Particularly for human resource development programs, local organizations provide one means for collective action on the community's perceived needs.

The poor are numerous among the membership of user-systems and this numerical strength may be converted into social action for poverty-alleviation through the adaptation of both formal and informal organizations and associations to provide important vehicles for demand creation and use. Such organizations among lower strata of the society may be one of the few means for expressing community solidarity and efficacy in a generally resource scarce context.

Indigenous Socioeconomic Processes

The total amount of resources needed for rapid development in most countries is so massive that a significant proportion must be mobilized outside the conventional financial system. Without additional inputs rural development is too costly for most national governments to afford. Community self-help approaches can provide a way to mobilize additional resources for development. Self-help is also important because when villagers work together in groups they gain a sense of power over their lives.

The critical features of self-help movements incorporate local initiative, locally-mobilized resources, and indigenous leadership to solve problems identified by the local community. In most countries, the concept of self-help is rooted in traditional work arrangements. Community self-help approaches are given a variety of names in different nations: Shramdan in Nepal, gotong royong in Indonesia, harambee in Kenya, ujamaa in Tanzania, shramadana in Sri Lanka, bayanihan in the Philippines, multirao in Brazil, and saemoul undong in Korea.

The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka, a non-profit, non-governmental self-help movement now in operation in over 3,000 villages, is a typical example. Once a village's most pressing problem has been identified by the local people, a Sarvodaya field worker organizes a weekend _shramadana_ work camp in which local resources are mobilized to cope with the problem. Physical work is combined with education and discussion in order to enlighten the villages to the power of collective action and give them a sense of control over their environment (Colletta, 1979).

Self-help development activities can complement limited government budgets for development programs. For instance, in Tanzania in the mid-1970's, the contribution of self-help labor equaled about 10 percent of the total development budget (Meerman, 1980). In these self-help projects, the Tanzanian government typically furnished construction materials (like cement) and the local community provided the labor. Most self-help projects are relatively small-scale; for instance, in Kenya about 1,800 such projects were completed in 1972, but the value per self-help project was only a few thousand dollars (Kenya Government, 1977, p.220). The trend in Kenya, and in several other nations, is toward fewer but larger self-help projects.

One of the main problems in the self-help approach to development is the "free-rider", or the individual who benefits from the self-help accomplishments without contributing labor, funds, or other resources to the self-help efforts. The free rider may feel that he can obtain the benefits of the collective action without contributing to it (Olsen, 1972; Popkin, 1979). One cause of free riders may be distrust and suspicion among members of self-help communities; effective collective actions rests on a feeling of community cooperation. In order to prevent free riders, some nations exclude them from utilizing the services provided by self-help activities. Or the free rider problem may be prevented by strong community pressures on an individual who is not contributing to a self-help project. For example, in Kenya some communities require donations to the self-help activity and prevent free riders from utilizing the services until they pay their share of the costs. However, there has recently been some public criticism of the coercive pressures that communities apply to free riders.

In focusing on gotong royong in Indonesia, Sartono's paper in this text gives us an inside view of the nature and functioning of communal processes of labor exchange in the rural world of Java.

Indigenous Knowledge Systems

Unlike traditional roles and social organizations, indigenous knowledge systems are seldom visible to development planners; consequently, they may be overlooked in terms of their potential contributions to development programs aimed at poverty-alleviation. Recently, however, the positive potential of indigenous knowledge systems to development programs has been reported in the research literature. Many examples are found in the field of agriculture, but their implications may extend to other development programs.

Indigenous knowledge may have implications for scientific research and development. For example, in the Puebla Project in Mexico, local farmers insisted that their open-pollinated corn varieties would outperform the new hybrid corn seed being introduced from CIMMYT, the international corn and wheat research center at Chapingo, Mexico./4 Field tests conducted by farmers and supervised by extension workers showed that the hybrid varieties were indeed inferior; consequently, the agronomists shifted their research attention to improving the yields of open-pollinated corn (Gladwin, 1976).

Furthermore, the Mexican farmers were able to convince the agronomists that the interplanting of corn and beans was superior to planting either crop alone. Previously, the agricultural scientists had claimed that such interplanting greatly complicated the task of insect control. Nevertheless, their field plots showed that net income from the corn-bean association was about double that when either corn or beans were planted alone. When these experimental results became evident in 1971, the experts belatedly realized that their original opposition to interplanting was incorrect and their recommendations to farmers were countermanded to favor intercropping.

The Human Reproduction Unit of the World Health Organization (WHO) directs one of the world's largest-scale research programs aimed at developing new contraceptives. This research and development program is guided in part by "acceptability" studies carried out by anthropologists and other social scientists who seek to determine which contraceptive methods would be accepted by eligible couples in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. For instance, the WHO acceptability researchers determined that traditional contraceptives

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/4 Prior to the initiation of the Puebla Project, a 1967 user survey indicated that about 55% of the farmers knew about hybrid corn. But less than 1% had planted it in 1967, because the farmers had seen that it was out-yielded by local, open-pollinated varieties (Díaz-Cisneros, 1974).

rarely involve genital manipulation. The biomedical research program at WHO is accordingly working on contraceptives that do not require the user to touch the genital area. Here, as in the case of agriculture, we see how indigenous knowledge can provide some guidelines for scientific research.

Generally, however, indigenous knowledge systems have been ignored by development researchers and planners. "Those with formal education and training believe that their knowledge and skills are superior and that uneducated and untrained people must, by definition, be ignorant and unskilled" (Chambers, 1979). Only in relatively rare cases have the unique advantages of indigenous knowledge been realized, yet often indigenous knowledge is more holistic than scientific knowledge because it is free of "disciplinary blinkers". The advantage of such an holistic approach is illustrated by the case of a cassava-eating grasshopper in Nigeria; an external observer, such as a pest-eradication expert, might not take an holistic view of the local eco-system. In contrast, one with indigenous technical knowledge would not overlook the important fact that because the insects were eaten they contributed to the nutrition of children (Howes, 1979).

A similar point is made by the fact that the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines did not originally breed its rice varieties for taste. Though the first of the "miracle" rice strains, like IR-8 and IR-20, outyielded indigenous varieties by two or three times, they were not accepted by subsistence farmers in many parts of Asia because they did not like the taste. Later, this problem was overcome, but it suggests that the IRRI plant breeders were less holistic in their perceptions of rice breeding than were Asian villagers, who considered taste important, along with yield, pest-resistance, and lodging-susceptibility.

Many development officials are gradually coming to accept the conclusions similar to Bell's (1979), who after reviewing research on indigenous knowledge systems found that: "scientific knowledge systems are the main basis for alleviating poverty through development programs, but they may do a slightly better job if they use bits and pieces of indigenous knowledge".

By no means is indigenous knowledge always correct or complete; it often requires some revision or addition. An illustration is provided by Richards' (1979) study of Sierra Leone farmers' perceptions of legume seeds. They saw the brightly-colored seeds of *Abrus preceteriusas* as useful for gambling chips and children's playthings. These seeds are highly poisonous, a fact that was *not* known by the farmers, and which certainly raises some questions about their use as children's playthings. Here scientific knowledge could contribute in an important way to indigenous knowledge. By knowing that the poisonous seeds were utilised as playthings, development planners could encourage farmers to grow a different legume. Drawing from their West African experience, Richards and Johnny's (1980) paper in section II of this volume further expands on the need to take traditional knowledge into account in nonformal education and rural development.

Traditional Etiology and Belief Systems

Indigenous systems of thinking, especially regarding cause-effect relationships, impact upon almost every type of human resource development program. Such traditional etiology has been rarely used by development programs to change the behavior of the poor, but considerable potential may exist.

Bonanni's (1980) short but penetrating paper explores the function and limits of nonformal education programs given varying indigenous mental structures later in this section. However, examples abound.

In India, a tetanus innoculation campaign was greatly resisted when the rationale for delivering the shots was based upon Western cause-effect logic. While the villagers attributed tetanus to an invisible flying insect called a Jam, the village midwives attempted to introduce the Western logic that tetanus results from unhygienic conditions. When these attempts to provide a logical (Western) explanation were abandoned and the midwives continued to associate curing tetanus with the mollification of Jam, the infections were readily accepted by the villagers. The midwives were then able to continue their longer term efforts at hygienic education (Luchinsky, 1963).

The "moon phase" study in Pakistan in the mid-1960's provides another illustration of the use of indigenous etiology. Oral contraceptives were being introduced to village women but government officials were concerned that the women, who were often illiterate and could not count, would misuse the pill, which was to be taken in 28-day cycles. In the moon-phase project, village women were instructed to take one pill each day, starting with the first day of the new moon. In essence, the lunar system (which was closely followed in Pakistani villages as a kind of calendar) was utilized to mark off the 28-day cycles in the human oestrus cycle. Results of the moon-phase project may have helped convince government officials that literacy was not an important prerequisite for the adoption of oral contraceptives in Pakistan, but local beliefs were.

Belief systems, typically manifested in the religious aspects of a culture are an essential avenue for development. In Sri Lanka, for example, ancient religious symbols are used to develop thinking on numbering processes, and the many ways of bilateral and rotating symmetry displayed by mural paintings and sculptures in Buddhist Temples are being used to teach geometry (Brunswic, 1975). In Thailand, Kowit's (1975) khit pen man utilizes Thai Buddhist philosophy as an educational basis for rural adult education. The use of other indigenous religious institutions and priestly roles for development purposes, such as the Buddhist Temples of Sri Lanka, Koptic churches in Ethiopia and Koranic schools in Malaysia, offer other significant examples.

It may be argued that using traditional roles, institutions, and processes to change the very values of which they are often guardians might, in effect, lead to the further entrenchment and reinforcement of dysfunctional traditional values. However, efforts can be made within existing cultural ideology to link modernization to traditional values by "symbolically" assigning indigenous institutions and processes to the ideology which is consonant with the latter. Recognizing this, Indonesian President Sukarno effectively built on the traditional principle and process of gotong royong (mutual cooperation) to symbolically introduce his principle of "guided democracy".

The alternative is to go against the moral foundations of a society and thus make the modernization process culturally discontinuous by using a coercive rather than a normative emphasis. This approach destroys traditional structures and forcibly substitutes elite preferences for societal predispositions.

Indigenous Technology and Transfer

Material culture can also be a crucial resource in development. The manufacture of educational materials from local resources, i.e., making globes from large calabashes of clay or writing implements from bamboo reeds, is essential when educating in conditions of economic hardship and resource scarcity. Here one gets into the issue of "appropriate" educational technologies for development./5

In Tanzania, the Arusha Appropriate Technology Center has focused on identifying indigenous village technologies, such as hand pumps, and improving on their efficiency. In addition, they have gone a step further and promoted the horizontal diffusion of such existing technologies between

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/5 Much work has been done in this area by UNESCO. Consult the New UNESCO Source book for Science Teachers, Paris, 1975; African Geography for Schools, Longman-UNESCO, Paris, 1974. Also, E.F. Schumaker calls for local resource utilization and intermediate technology in Small is Beautiful - Economics as if People Mattered, Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., New York, 1973. Additionally, World Education in New York has published numerous handbooks for field workers on choosing, creating, and using appropriate methods and materials. See especially their recently published From the Field compiled by Catherine D. Crone and Carmen St. John Hunter (1980).

villages thus serving as a catalyst in bringing villagers and their technologies together.

While numerous indigenous technologies -- from the rice thatch roofing of South East Asia to the clay brick walls made from the salt pans of the Khalahari and bamboo piping for tube wells in West Africa -- abound, a critical element is the transmission of the skills related to such material technologies. The indigenous apprenticeship system of Nigeria described in Calloway's (1968) writings and King's (1978) recent work on the informal artisan sector in Kenya attest to the weight and importance of modern as well as traditional technologies and their rich indigenously based systems of transmission.

Later in this section, Byram's (1980) study of the Botswana Oodi Weavers demonstrates the powerful blend of material culture (e.g. weavings) as organizational tool, productive instrument and educational process.

Recapitulation

In the preceding section, a variety of social/cultural forms have been identified and analyzed as to their impact upon poverty oriented development programs. Each form (traditional leadership, communication systems, organizations, etc.) may have either a positive, neutral, or negative influence on development programs, depending upon whether the indigenous form is recognized or ignored; and whether it is adapted to fit the objectives and activities of the development program.

Indigenous social/cultural forms may be more valued by, and therefore more particularly important for, the absolute poor. Less-educated and lower-income members of the user-system often give greater credence to indigenous social/cultural leadership roles, communication channels, organizational forms, technologies, knowledge systems, and etiologies. On the other hand, such traditional forms are not always readily apparent to development program designers and implementers, and, consequently, often have not been understood or appropriately modified so as to contribute to development programs.

It is clear that a bridge is needed between development agents and rural people to facilitate the transfer of information, skills and attitude-sets relevant to village development. Development agents often operate at a different conceptual level and in a different framework from the villagers they purport to serve so that the poorest remain on the fringes of development. As a Javanese farmer remarked to me, "there are no people's programs here, only government programs". That indigenous culture can provide such a bridge is stressed in the writing of Goulet (1971):

> To conclude from largely unchallenged evidence that development is incompatible with 'traditional' value systems is not only inhuman but foolish, even on the grounds of pure efficiency. One practical consequence of this error is that few planners tailor development's potentially attractive benefits to the dimensions of traditional existence rationalities. Perceptive students of development have long known, of course, that certain traditional values are consonant with innovation.

The crux of the culture-development dilemma is to discover the most efficient and effective means of introducing skills, knowledge, and attitudes within existing cultural patterns, institutions, values and human resources so that economic development is optimized and sociocultural change occurs in a meaningful, harmonious fashion.

GENERAL ISSUES IN THE DEPLOYMENT OF A CULTURE-BASED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The principles set forth thus far hinge on a central issue in development: "directionality". Is it better to start at the top of a national structure and direct efforts down? Is it better to start at the bottom and direct the necessary information upward? Or is there some middle ground where national development policies which truly respond to regional and local needs, problems, and conditions can be enacted? The present international development strategy may be striving for a decentralized development effort, but so far successful mechanisms and methods have been difficult to find and use. All too often it has been easier to use clear-cut bureaucratic channels to apply homogeneous, national solutions to the problems of heterogeneous, localized populations. Development by "command" through external channels of communication has led to "lip service" acceptance, waste, and corruption at the village level./6 A middle ground strategy is advocated in this paper.

/6 As a matter of perspective, one could argue that this "command-like" approach to development fits well with the authoritarian nature of Indonesian relationships (e.g. bapak-anak, father-son), and that effective development might be accomplished by merely getting the "right" message into the command system.

This middle-ground strategy uses traditional culture to mediate between government development agents and the people. This strategy advocates moving away from attempts to answer development problems by imposing external solutions and increasing staffing and funding and toward using local cultural institutions, processes, and roles as the media for development. In order to be meaningful and lasting, development problems and the solutions for them must be identified by the "underdeveloped" communities themselves. External agents must help the local community to generate internal solutions that mobilise internal resources in a self-reliant way. The best that external agents can do is facilitate or catalyze this process at key junctures possibly using mechanisms and methods suggested above.

The strategy embodied in this paper is by no means foolproof; it is a strategy whose merits have yet to be systematically tested. Problems abound: What are the ethics of tampering with traditional cultural forms? If one tilts the functions of an indigenous medium too far is there a risk of destroying the medium itself? What is the best way to discover which elements of a folk culture can be adapted to specific sets of development problems? What kind of local participation is necessary for folk media to be an active agent of change? Who stands to gain or lose by using culture-based institutions? What is the entire range of cultural norms and motivational resources that can be mobilized for development? What are the cost-benefits of such a strategy in financial as well as social-psychological terms? What are the limitations of such a strategy?

One response to the above issues is that traditional cultural forms are already being affected and modified, frequently in a negative, haphazard manner as a result of a non-interventionist position. Clearly, understanding and sensitivity are needed to balance structure and function with any of the cultural modalities illustrated in this paper. Such a strategy should not be undertaken lightly but should be combined with efforts of social scientists, national planners, and, most importantly, the communities to be affected. Since the consequences of such a strategy can never really be known until it is tried, this paper advocates experimenting with small-scale, controlled projects before embarking on wholesale national programs.

There are other problem areas to be considered as well. The medium-message dichotomy could become a substantial barrier. As Soemardjan (1966) observed, "In matters of social innovation, which is in effect the essence of community development, reactions of people in the rural areas (of Indonesia) generally are more influenced by the personality of the innovator and his approach (person and form) than by ultimate goals (content) that will materialize only after the process is finished". If the audience's tendency is to tune into the form, while losing sight of the content, what will be gained in the development process? If they are captured by the process and structure of a game or activity, while the message fails to strike a chord, does this constitute development?

A possible answer to these questions is two-fold: first, the particular message must be united with the right medium; and second, this strategy should be used in conjunction with other reinforcing approaches. For example, providing a market exhibition on family planning is useless unless there is an adequate mechanism for distributing birth control devices in support of this effort. The core development issue this problem represents is that of the challenge in employing the culture-based strategy for development. The solution lies not so much in the innovation of a specific medium for connecting discrete pieces of the community puzzle, but rather in seeing the pieces in relation to one another in a mutually supportive, interdependent manner: e.g., promoting literacy with attendant reading materials; providing tools with skill training; and insuring opportunities to utilize what is learned. Thus, as Bowers (1969) suggests, "a system approach is obviously desirable, so that messages are communicated through a variety of sensory inlets and a range of media, each supporting and complementing one another".

The decentralization of certain aspects of the implementation of development programs by using indigenous cultural forms at the community level presents other potential problems:

(a) Existing formal organizations at the local level, if they are utilized in development programs, may largely exclude the landless poor from membership. If so, considerable effort by development field workers may be necessary to organize new groups among the poorest of the poor.

(b) The development program may be captured by local elites, so that relatively little poverty-alleviation actually occurs.

(c) By empowering the poor with the perceived ability to control their future, local groups may have disruptive consequences. When the poor's newly-raised expectations are not met, they may feel severe dissatisfaction which could in turn lead to political instability, social disorganization, and intensified hostilities (Jonassen, 1974).

(d) Indigenous forms, if misused, may also tend to reinforce negative residual values. By embracing rather than merely drawing legitimacy from traditional forms to change behavior, one runs the risk of reinforcing the very values one may desire to modify in the long term.

(e) The instrumental use of indigenous forms by development planners may lead to the implementation of development projects based on externally imposed objectives.

(f) Utilizing local associations may reinforce ethnic cleavages, caste, and other aspects of local pluralism as emergent forms of "retribalization" and "balkanization" which may inhibit development (Berger, 1975).

While there are no easy solutions to the ethical political and practical problems of a culture-based strategy for nonformal education and development, it is, nevertheless, essential that these problems be confronted systematically through action research.

STRATEGIC OPTIONS FOR REACHING THE POOR: THE STRENGTHS OF A CULTURE-BASED APPROACH

A central concern of this paper has been how best to reach the poor through development programs. Several culture based strategies can be summarized as follows:

(a) To use local social organizations of the poor at the community level; where such organizations do not exist, informal networks can be utilized and perhaps converted into more formal associations. Indigenous social organizations are often viewed as a form of "risk insurance" for the poor and are particularly likely to be perceived as credible.

(b) To use indigenous processes of labor exchange, decision-making and self-help, as well as other user-centered approaches, both to increase community participation and commitment and to defray costs.

(c) To recruit and train para-professional field workers from existing functionally related roles in the user-system, or with characteristics similar to users, in order to bridge the social distance between professional development workers and the poor.

(d) To view pluralism as a potential source of more diversified and locally-relevant solutions to problems. Allowing the sense of security in local loyalties to flourish could lead to a greater willingness among the poor to take risks and adopt innovations, which would increase user demand, control, and accountability and strengthen primordial (primary group) loyalties in order to create secure, self-confident users who would be more receptive and less fearful of external change agents.

(e) To understand and adapt indigenous culture-rooted knowledge, cognitive, and evaluative systems as contributions to development planning.

(f) To deploy a socio-cultural "group"-oriented theory of behavior change, rather than the psychological, individual-oriented theories currently underlying development strategies. To rely more on indigenous forms of peer influence to promote and sustain behavior change.

(g) To recognize and strengthen "middle rung" roles, processes, groups, networks, and organizations as mediating bodies in order to build connective tissue between indigenous conditions and external interventions. In addition, to insure that quasi-autonomous "middle rung" mediating bodies do not get coopted by government bureaucracy particularly in the areas of financial control and leadership selection. Such bodies can serve to integrate the traditional with the modern system so that development syncretizes the existing social structure with new economic functions as well as links local level decision making structures with regional and national structures.

(h) To utilize indigenous communication channels to contact, and orchestrate the involvement of, local groups in development programs.

(i) To utilize additive, rather than substitutional, strategies which tend to be compatible with cultural and cognitive patterns of recipients so that great amounts of old behavior need not be given up immediately nor large amounts of new behavior quickly internalized.

(j) To adapt strategies to fit indigenous technologies, recreation and work schedules, spatial, climatic and time/seasonal patterns of the user wherever possible.

(k) To establish patterns of social organization maintenance for the continuation of an adopted innovation through an emphasis on indigenous groups as well as on leaders as points of intervention.

This paper has essentially been an attempt to outline the framework of an alternative strategy for promoting development. What is needed now is basic research to test the hypotheses about the relationship between culture and socio-economic change underpinning this strategy. Fundamental research is needed into the social psychology of rural peoples (e.g., perception, motivation, attention span, learning styles, cognitive styles); into the capacities of various aspects of culture for adaptation in the development problems (e.g., nutrition and population education, child care); into audience behavior in cultural institutions (attitudes, tastes, and frequency of interaction); and into the possibility and consequences of combining modern and traditional means of communicating. Finally, action research is needed to develop and test specific intervention strategies within the culture-development model in highly controlled situations.

Certainly, a first step in making development programs more effective is to insure that such delivery systems actually reach the poor, and that the poor are involved in participatory development systems. Such a concept does not mean involving the poor as passive "users" who live in an institutional and value-free "vacuum", but requires some degree of involvement of the poor and their socio-cultural context in designing development programs. This will necessitate focusing research and development programs so that early investigations will look at the problems, needs, and cultural patterns of the poor.

DEVELOPING A SOCIOCULTURAL COMMUNITY PROFILE

Given the preceding overview of a culture based strategy for promoting development, the field practitioner might justifiably ask where he goes from here?

The first step in developing such a strategy for a particular context is to understand the community and its workings. This could be done by creating a simple socio-cultural profile of the community, which would focus on identifying its indigenous patterns of organization, motivation, communication, and leadership. The following set of data gathering tasks might form the basis for the community profile.

(a) A Map of Informal and Formal Community Leadership Patterns

Community leaders provide an established channel of legitimate authority and communication within the community. They should be used whenever possible to sanction and/or to assist in the direct implementation of community education programs. Sociometric techniques are a ready methodology for locating leaders in a community.

(b) An Inventory and Description of Indigenous Institutions and Associations

Familial, religious, market, productive, social, political, and other institutional arrangements can serve as structures through which development functions may be adapted and implemented. Such institutions and other associational arrangements could be inventoried and functionally classified.

(c) A Description of Basic Community Communication Patterns

The establishment of when, where, why, and with whom people meet and exchange information can provide the community educator clues to integrating community nonformal education programming into the normal patterns of social interchange. Networking techniques may be used to trace lines of interchange between actors in a given village. Types of information exchanged, channels, and differential access may all be measured.

(d) The Identification of Community Time/Space Utilization

This is crucial information for establishing when and where it would be best to provide educational programs. Twenty-four hour recall methodology following "a day in the life" of various community actors may provide data as to time utilization. Space use may be ascertained through observed use of mapped facilities in a given village.

(e) The Identification of Indigenous and Role Providing Communication-Educational Functions in the Community

The community educator might adapt traditional functional roles, e.g. village midwife, to serve as a channel for the delivery of modernizing messages. One might inventory such roles by interviewing key informants (long-term residents) as to whom one goes in order to meet his/her basic needs, e.g. health, shelter, food, etc.

(f) A Description of Communication-Educational Techniques and Processes Utilized in Traditional Institutions and by Indigenous Roles

Community educators might learn a great deal about effective means of information and skill exchange, the molding of values and attitudes and general techniques of persuasion and behavioral change by examining traditional rites, ceremonies, entertainment and other transactions. This might best be done through detailed participant observation and recordings.

(g) Identification of Community-Rooted Incentive/Motivational Systems

An assessment of the norms or standards of conduct to which people are expected to conform is extremely useful. To understand what motivates traditional behavior, such as attending a feast or spending exorbitant amounts of money on a funeral or wedding, might help the community educator to select appropriate incentives for programs. Sanctions or positive and negative rewards which reinforce some activities and serve as a disincentive to others could be identified through interviews and observations. The critical incident approach may be another technique for getting at motivational patterns.

(h) Identification of Community-Based Participatory Behavior (Indigenous Decision-making and Consumption Patterns)

To understand why people actively participate in certain educational activities but dropout of others would be helpful information in avoiding the latter. Why do people show high participation in certain village activities, ceremonies, events, and low participation in others? What are the means of reaching decisions and dealing with conflict in a given community? Again interview and observational techniques may be used to gather this information.

(i) A Description of Traditional Learning Styles

The community nonformal educator can make his instructional techniques more effective if they are related to the way people traditionally learn in the context of the community. For example, how do young girls learn to weave baskets for carrying fruits in the village? How does an apprentice to a shoe repairman learn the trade? Participant observation and rich description can provide insights into this phenomenon.

(j) An Assessment of Traditional Knowledge

Understanding the kinds of information that people already possess and apply in development sectors such as health and agriculture is extremely important for determining present effectiveness and knowledge gaps. In-depth interviews with practitioners, e.g. farmers and midwives, can inform the community nonformal educator about such knowledge and its control and dissemination.

(k) Mapping of Indigenous Technologies and their Diffusion

An inventory of existing technologies, their efficiency, and their subsequent spread can be useful in designing strategies of technology adaption, innovation, and diffusion.

(l) Understanding Core Value Orientations

To comprehend and take into account the dominant community values, assumptions, and perceptions toward the natural, interpersonal, and heavenly worlds can be critical in the design of any development activity. What are people's aspirations, ambitions, and requisite levels of satisfaction? What stake do they have in the existing system? Interview techniques and projective questions might best measure these attributes.

(m) Identification of Existing Development Agencies in the Community, i.e. Health Agricultural Extension, Social Welfare, and their Delivery Patterns (instructional style)

It would be useful for community nonformal educators to possess a mental list of all extension agents in the village as resource inputs into programming to meet local needs. It would be even more helpful if he could assist them in gearing their instructional style to the learning style and patterns of the local populace.

(n) Identification of Consumers of Existing Development Agencies (nonindigenous in the community)

It would be useful to the community nonformal educators to know who is, and even more important, who is not participating in NFE programs in the community. And why certain groups or persons in the community are active consumers of NFE and others are not. What are the characteristics of these two populations? How do they differ? How might non-consumers be converted into consumers?

(o) Follow-up Information on the Use of What is Learned by Consumers of Development Programs, especially in Relationship to Increased Productivity and Improvement in Family Well-being

Neither the community nonformal educator nor the technical extension agent can merely assume that participation in a course leads to applying what was learned. It would be helpful to know and understand the functionality and dysfunctionality of NFE learning efforts.

(p) A Description of Community Decision-making Processes and Locus of Influence and Control within the Community

In order to influence change in individual behavior, the community educator will have to be cognizant of points of decision-making (decision-makers) and influence in the community to support and fuel his program. Access to crucial programmatic resources (human and other) might be dependent upon the congruence with certain patterns of decision-making and sanctioning forces operating in the community.

(q) A Recognition of Larger Structural or Intersystemic Arrangements

Finally, while it is important to understand the organization and dynamics internal to a given community, it is equally important for the community nonformal educator to understand the relationships between those persons in the community and others outside. Here one gets into such areas as land control and use, access to capital external to the system, influence and proven relations within and without the system, access to new knowledge and technologies, etc. Questions of dependence, independence, and interdependence must be dealt with.

What is required is not a rigorous research design in preparation for the defense of an academic thesis, but a relevant set of questions and answers to measure the underlying socio-cultural and psychological infrastructure of a community. The above is not an exhaustive list but rather a guideline for accomplishing the task. The central question remains: Why do people behave the way they do in a given context and how might field practitioners' understanding of community behavior facilitate the process of development? Only after the community socio-cultural analysis has been done and our understanding enriched can we begin to talk about learning needs, instructional materials and methods, staff recruitment and training, among other dimensions of using indigenous sociocultural forms as a basis for development.

With the foregoing broad conceptual framework and overview in mind, now let us turn, in the ensuing sections, to examine in greater detail, case studies of various efforts to cultivate indigenous structures and folk media for nonformal education and development worldwide.

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GOTONG ROYONG: MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IN INDONESIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

by

Sartono Kartodirjo

BACKGROUND

Gotong royong is a traditional form of mutual assistance practised in the villages of Indonesia. Its potential and limitations as a vehicle for community development can best be understood through the socio-economic and political context in which it operates (i.e. the rural village and its collective life) and its own historical development.

Gotong royong is one form of solidarity characteristic of traditional agrarian communities. These communities are bound together by social relationships which are called primordial - i.e. through ties of family, geographic proximity, and faith. Communities which are simply based on emotional ties, on mechanical solidarity are said to be structurally integrated: social exchanges are direct and limited, community members are homogeneous in mentality and morality and possess a collective conscience and common faith and there is little differentiation of functions or distribution of work.

When new and different functions emerge, coupled with co-ordination which enables the community to function better as an entity, the community is said to be functionally integrated. This shift from structural to functional integration takes place historically with the increase of social differentiation in the community, i.e. the increasing distribution of work. More organic forms of solidarity are needed to co-ordinate and solidify the newly emerging heterogeneity. According to Durkheim, a functionally integrated community is bound together by a retributive law, whereas a structurally integrated community is shaped by a repressive law.[1]

Social solidarity in a community is based on the principle of social exchange - for example,

- The land-tilling system, i.e. exchange of land for labour.
- *Pancen* (manpower aid made available to the village chief), *gugur gunung* (to do cooperative labour without pay) or *kerig aji* (to go forth in a group to do a job), i.e. exchange of labour for services (such as protection, security and information).
- *Sumbangan* or *punjungan* (to give a donation or presents), i.e. exchange of things for things.

Social exchange theory asserts that a social exchange brings about a moral code for the behaviour of community members which has an existence of its own, free from the situation of the social exchange itself.[2] It is the social exchange morality that shapes the relations among individuals - economically, socially as well as politically. This morality has an impact which is much more extensive than the situation of the social exchange itself, and invariably forms the basis of social relations. It is for this reason that a social exchange in a village community is not limited to a direct social exchange in the sense that the giver directly expects something in return from the recipient. There is a belief that the recipient will act in accordance with the act of the giver. Moreover, the giver entertains the hope that one day what he gives will be received back if not by himself, then by his family or even anyone else. This is definitely relevant to what we call hutang budi (a debt of gratitude), gawe kebecikan (to do good things), ngalah luhur wekasane (to have considerations for others), pada-pada (to do likewise), tepa slira (to put oneself in another's place), etc.

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[1] Durkheim, E. (1974) *The Division of Labour*, London: The Free Press

[2] Peter Ekeh, (1974) *Social Exchange Theory*, Heinemann, London.

The social exchange process, along with the resultant morality, serves as a stimulus, or sanction, for a cultural communication network. The social exchange process creates social and cultural relations which exist by themselves, free from the level of the community's economic and social development. This cultural atmosphere creates a separate social solidarity.

Although the social differentiation is still simple and its level of specialization is still low - it is not of the same level as the differentiation in an industrial community - the morality can create integrative forces of a social exchange and strengthen the cohesion of a village community.

Social solidarity in a community is determined by an interaction between the work distribution process and social exchange process and with the morality arising from the exchange. On the basis of that, the situation of Indonesian villages today can be described as follows:

> Structural differentiation is moving more in the direction of functional differentiation although it is still on a traditional level and has not achieved the level of differentiation in an industrial community.

- Functional differentiation has started to increase; and does not solely constitute a separation of identical elements.
- Due to the existence of morality and collective conscience, though functional differentiation is still limited and even accentuates structural differentiation, an organic solidarity already exists.
- This makes possible the emergence of a more powerful functional integration with the result that the village community does not constitute structural integration alone.

Gotong-royong constitutes a manifestation of high level social solidarity based on morality, common sentiments and general consensus.

The analysis to follow will show, among other things:

(1) the development of various forms of solidarity historically;

(2) the extent to which village communities have demonstrated functional differentiation;

(3) the existence of organic solidarity along with retributive law;

(4) the extent to which the spirit of gotong-royong is in accord with organic solidarity and its morality;

(5) the changing nature of gotong-royong as group relations move from communal to associational ties;

(6) the potential role of gotong-royong in Indonesian community development.

THE VILLAGES AND GOTONG ROYONG IN THE ANCIENT MATARAM ERA (EIGHTH TO TENTH CENTURIES)[3]

During this period many Hindu temples were built both by the king and local government authorities. All were built by mobilizing the untouchables and slaves, while the peasants and merchants produced food, and the Hindu priest designed the structures. The building of major structures called buat haji required a large labour force. Since much of the work in the fields was done by the women, the men were able to leave their villages to work on the buat haji structures.

This situation resembles what in Bali is known as ngayah, i.e. work done cooperatively for common interests in a village, such as putting up outside walls of temples or building temples. On such occasions, all the villagers - young and old, male and female - contribute their services, but the work is arranged in such a way that it does not interfere with their personal needs. Such an institution is believed to have existed in ancient times, although probably in a different form.

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[3] The data are drawn from: Buchari, M.A. (1976), Some Considerations on the Problem of the Shift of Mataram's Center of Government from Central to East Java in the 10th Century, A.D. Berita Pusat Penelitian Purbakala dan Pening-galan Nasional (Bulletin of the National Archaeological Research Center) No. 10, Jakarta, 1976.

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THE VILLAGES AND GOTONG ROYONG IN THE MAJAPAHIT ERA (14th CENTURY)[4]

Nagarakertagama, which was written by Mpu Prapanca (circa 1364) contains a comprehensive description of the Majapahit Kingdom.

During this period most of the peasants lived in village communities. They were free people and generally possessed ownership rights or at least the right to cultivate land. At that time, the population was small, and there was plenty of uncultivated land. This strengthened the position of the peasants vis-a-vis court officials and other government authorities. Village life was regulated by *adat* (customs and traditions) and most conflicts were resolved within the village by the village chief. Only major crimes were brought before a royal court of justice; generally the penalty was a fine. Those who were unable to pay the fine lost their status as free people so that government authorities were able to put them to work as slaves.

This fine-imposing system constituted one of the economic systems set up by the Majapahit Kingdom. Taxes collected from merchants were called *arik purih* and included taxes on birth, marriage, death, travel and house construction. The king was also entitled to part of the harvest.

The existence of so many types of taxes at the time showed that the Majapahit communities and rural areas were already very open in nature. They possessed not only an internal communications network, but also extensive external communications covering inter-island trade throughout the Indonesian archipelago. This situation naturally had an impact on gotong-royong and other systems of mobilising labour in the rural areas. The king and his aides had authority to mobilise the population for various tasks. As described in Nagarakertagama, for example, construction of structures in the capital city or anything needed for the king's travel required a large-scale mobilization of labour of various kinds: kerja rodi (forced labour), gugur gunung (to do cooperative labour without pay) and kerig aji (to go forward in a group to do a job).

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[4] Based primarily on the book written by T. Pigeaud, *Java in the Fourteenth Century*, Volume IV, The Hague, 1962.

Mobilization of manpower was also conducted for the construction and maintenance of public works such as dams, water channels, dike roads, highways, bridges, and market places. This was carried out through gugur gunung (free labour). In return the king was expected to protect the religious communities and to maintain order.

At the village level family heads were required to contribute to important village events (eg. celebrations, weddings, etc.) in the form of money, agricultural produce or services. The labour required for the preparation and organization of these celebrations was drawn from a sinoman group (association for mutual help) consisting mainly of young people.

Villagers also worked together on projects of common interest, such as maintaining village roads, guardhouses, village fences, irrigation systems and doing guard duty and village management. These joint activities (kerig desa) required different participation from various social classes: the "core villagers" (homeowners, permanent residents, irrigated rice field owners, high-ranking and powerful people) had the primary responsibility for kerig desa; private citizens and unirrigated rice field owners were expected to perform only some of these village duties; odd-job men had no or very few duties.[6]

Under certain circumstances, gugur gunung (freely contributed labour) was organized by mobilizing the entire manpower regardless of class. To ensure an equitable distribution of duties to the entire populace, specialized groupings were formed, such as woodcutters, road maintenance men, letter carriers, etc.

Manpower aid called pancen was made available to the village chief. It was broken down according to functions, such as janggol (to render general help), gundal (to accompany the village chief on a trip) and plengkung (to serve as messengers). All types of the mobilisation described above represented rendering of services not separate from village interests in general. It is therefore natural to regard it as part of the gotong-royong or sambat-sinambat (to help each other as neighbours) system.

Villagers also worked together to help one another on their individual tasks distributing irrigation water, moving to a new house, thatching a roof, etc. Matters relating to family, land, and cattle involved common interests in a village and their solution had to be conducted by means of collective effort (sambatan, sambat-sinambat, and gotong royong). This solidarity was reinforced by other co-operative efforts (eg. building collective rice barns, corrals and seedbeds) and other means of developing collective consciousness (e.g. religious rites held to honour the guardian spirits of the village, visits to holy shrines, etc.). In the sambatan system, food is often provided (called jabur or caneut in West Java), and sometimes also payment (majaran).

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[6] C. van Vollenhoven, Het Adatrecht van Nederlandsch-Indie (The Adat Law of Netherland Indies), Volume I, Leiden, 1931, p. 512 ff.

In Priyangan and Banten areas (West Java), gotong-royong is better known as liliuran, rempugan, utang gigir or ngahiras. In Banten it also includes loans of things to villagers.

THE CHANGING NATURE OF GOTONG ROYONG IN THE 20th CENTURY[7]

Studying the development of gotong-royong in Java in the first two or three decades of this century, one gets the impression that there have been a great many variations of the system as practiced in various areas. It is the result of various factors affecting the socio-economic life in the villages: e.g., 1) the dryness of the land which requires that it be tilled quickly at the beginning of the rainy season; 2) the area of farmland which requires quick cultivation; 3) the available farm labour force; 4) the distance from the city or factory.

Due to the above factors and/or the particular condition in certain areas, the form of sambat-sinambat (helping each other as neighbours) also has undergone quite a few variations. It has been: (1) restricted to the tilling of lungguh land (land given to government employees in lieu of salary); (2) limited to relatives and close friends; (3) employing farm labourers, a cheaper

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7. Adatrecht Bundel (Collection of adat law), Volume II, p. 175-178, 268-270.

arrangement than the sambatan system; (4) limited to the use of cattle for plowing and harrowing; (5) restricted to sambatan for planting and harvesting of rice fields; (6) conducted only in isolated villages; and (7) conducted by providing food and/or pay.

The most interesting feature of the above-mentioned variations is the capability of sambatan to adapt itself to the environment so that the socio-economic system in the villages remains effective. The use of payment changes the practice of sambatan in its original form. Sambatan is maintained when the situation absolutely requires it: for instance, when there are not enough cattle for plowing, when land has to be tilled in a short time so that mobilization of labour is needed at once, or when cooperation in the form of sambatan began to be limited to relatives. While in many areas, the practice of sambatan tends to decrease, there are many other areas where it is still generally practiced, such as Semarang, Rembang, Temanggung and Bebrek. Conversely, the system is completely unknown in the Sukaraja area.

Gotong royong has also taken on some new forms. One of these is the holding of collective (rather than individual) feasts, celebrations, and gift-giving. The practice of giving gifts for weddings, circumcision, kaulan (celebrations held in fulfillment of a vow) and commemoration of death continues to exist, and is even felt as a heavy burden for the people. Often a family holds a celebration in order to recover the presents it has given to others, especially if the family has given a lot of presents but has never or seldom held a celebration of its own. Sometimes people even hold a celebration as a speculative venture to make a profit.

In the 20th century, a form of gotong royong exists in the traditional association known as *sinoman* (associations of mutual help).[8] The members of *sinoman* are peasants belonging to the *gogol* (powerful) class. Members help each other in matters relating to death, marriage, circumcision, repair of houses, etc. If a member is unable to help, he must find a substitute, usually his brother or someone else who must be paid by him. Outsiders are usually not accepted to help.

Members contribute their services and food is served in return. A village often has three to four *sinoman*; some villages even have as many as nine. A *sinoman* generally has 25 to 40 members. If a *sinoman* has too many members, the association is split into two. For a particular request, the host expects his sinoman to send a limited number of members; too many people will create too large a burden.

Only family heads are accepted as members; boys are positively rejected. An initiation fee is levied, the amount depending on the capacity of the members. Following payment of the initiation fee, the member is formally admitted, and the chairman announces his membership to all members.

The managing board of a *sinoman* consists of one chief, one or two messengers and one clerk. The chief is elected by the members by a majority vote, while the messengers are chosen by the chief after consulting the members. The board members have the same status as the members, only they are *primes inter pares*. The members have the right to dismiss the board.

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[8] M.J. van der Pauwert, *Een tweetal desa verenigingen* tot onderling hulpbetoon (Two village associations for mutual help), in T.B.B. 1897, p. 264-304.

The board has various duties, such as managing the property and funds of the sinoman, arranging activities, collecting fines, etc. While at first all board members serve in honorary positions, later they receive compensation from the association's funds. They receive, among other things, what is called *palangkah wates* or *pakendeng*, i.e. the sum of money paid by a groom to the *sinoman* of his future parents-in-law. The amount often is based on the distance between the groom's house and the bride's, the number of bridges to be crossed, etc.

Work is distributed among members of a *sinoman*. For example, some are assigned to circulate announcements and invitations; others to serve as night watchmen.

One of the common activities of a *sinoman* is to buy things, such as china, and wedding and burial accessories which are then rented to members as well as non-members.

There is a system of fines levied on members for offenses such as joking while doing some work, falling asleep on guard duty, drinking liquor. A heavy fine is imposed if the person holding a celebration is late in informing the *sinoman* about it. If a member commits a serious crime, he is expelled from the association and subsequently isolated from the group.

In case of a special event in the village, such as *sedekah bumi* (a religious rite held to honour the guardian spirits of the village) or *bersih desa* (an annual village feast including a performance of a play from the animistic cycle), all chiefs of *sinoman* are assembled by the village chief for the purpose of collecting funds and organising the activity.

In various areas, sinoman has been known for generations. In Jatirogo (Tuban), it has existed since 1893; in Pasuruan, since 1873. It has also existed for a long time at Gresik, Lamongan, Sidayu and Sidoarjo.

That the gotong-royong system has existed as a manifestation of deep-rooted solidarity in a village community has been clearly proven by the spontaneous emergence of this system in a new area, such as a transmigration area.[9] In these new settlements (e.g. South Sumatra) where manpower is limited and plenty of land must be tilled, new groups called regu (team) have emerged, each with more than ten members. They work together in plowing each member's land but also hire themselves out as a group to work on others' land.

The term used in this area is sambatan (neighbors helping each other). There are several types of sambatan:

- Village construction projects involving the mobilization of all villagers - e.g. the building of health care centres, markets, roads, etc. Generally, they get no food nor pay. One is exempted from this duty only when there is death or birth in his family.
- Building an individual's house involving the participation of 5 to 15

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[9] From Laporan Survey Desa Transmigrasi Belitang (A Report on A Survey of Belitang Transmigration Village), 1977. "Transmigration" is the Indonesian term for a government programme to resettle peasants from heavily populated areas of Java in sparsely populated areas in other parts of the archipelago.

people, normally only neighbours and/or relatives. The host provides food and drinks, but no payment; carpenters, however, are paid for their services. The number of people mobilized depends on the phase of the construction; for example, 20 people are needed for carrying building materials, usually for one or half a day only.

Agricultural tasks such as clearing a forest and processing land. The time needed for forest clearing is indefinite. The help is needed only at the beginning, and when the work can be done by the land-holder himself, the sambatan is discontinued. Normally no food is provided, and each brings his own. However, if the sambatan lasts two or three days only, the man receiving the help must provide food. In a short sambatan participants work the whole day, but in a sambatan of long duration they are expected to work only half a day each day.

There is a gotong-royong system called neba in which three people work together on each other's land. They start on the first man's land in the morning; after lunch they work on the second man's land; the following morning they start on the third man's land, and so on. Usually only drink and no food is provided.

Another method of tilling land is called arisan. A member of regu (team) asks for the help of the entire team to work on his land, usually for half a day, by paying all who help. The money is not pocketed by the members but contributed to a common fund used for buying things for common use (e.g. plowing equipment) to be loaned to members. A non-member may ask for the help of the team, but has to pay. This is called perayaan.

In Bali *gotong royong* (known as *krama* or *seka*) has materialized in many forms:[10]

- *Krama desa* involves all heads of family in a village, about 550 of them.
- *Krama banjar* involves a ward of a village called *banjar* which has 20 - 70 heads of family.
- *Krama subak* covers an area designated as *subak* which is about 100 hectares and has several hundreds of farm workers.
- A religious form of *krama* covers maintenance of temples and other village property, and conduct of ceremonies.
- *Lumbung banjar* involves cooperation in harvesting, tying, and storing rice. One *lumbung* (rice barn) has 30 or more members, in accordance with the capacity of the barn which can hold up to 3 tons of rice.
- *Seka gong*, *seka barong* and *seka joged janger* involve co-operation in the field of the performing arts.
- *Metetulung* involves collective help for people suffering from a disaster.
- Ngajakang or silihulih involves collective assistance in the building of houses or plowing of fields. It is customary to provide food and drinks for such an occasion.

The best known form of mutual assistance in Bali is *krama subak*. *Subak* is an association of farmers who get water from a common dam or water channel. They work together in damming a river, regulating the distribution of water, maintaining security in the fields, and fixing the time for planting. All violators are punishable by fine. The fine goes to the funds of the subak. Many expenses are paid for with these funds. Each subak has a board and conducts various ceremonies, such as balik sumpah when the rice plants are 42 days old.

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[10] Data drawn from *Laporan Survey Desa Timpag di Bali* (A Report on a Survey of Timpag Village, Bali), 1977.

It is clear from this description of the Balinese equivalent of gotong royong that almost every aspect of life in the villages is covered by some form of mutual assistance. The common religion in Bali is a major factor reinforcing this solidarity.

GOTONG ROYONG FOR VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT

During the Third Five-Year Plan many development programmes are being carried out at the village level, all of which require active participation of the villagers. Participation is through traditional or modern institutions. Modern institutions are meant to provide modern associational ties so that village solidarity can be preserved.

A survey of Central and East Java in 1979 showed that there is full participation in development programmes carried out through gotong-royong, i.e. the so-called swadaya masyarakat.[11] All villagers participated irrespective of wealth, status, or education. This result contrasts with those of family planning programmes in which participation varies according to wealth and education.

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[11] Research Report: Evaluation of Rural Development Program, Rural & Regional Studies Centre, Gadja Mada University, 1979, Vol. III.

From this we can conclude that *gotong-royong* is still operating in many villages and constitutes a valuable asset in implementing development programmes. We have also seen from previous analysis that *gotong royong* is capable of adapting itself to changing socio-economic circumstances.

THE WATER USERS ASSOCIATION IN NGADILUWIH (KEDIRI, JAVA)

Between 1969 and 1972 the Groundwater Development Project (GDP) of the Public Works Department undertook an exploration to provide irrigation water for an area of 187 hectares. For each pump-well a Water Users Association (Perkumpulan Petani Pemakai Air - P3A) was set up. At the time of the survey (1979) there were 77 pumpwells in operation irrigating 3,000 hectares out of which 17 have been operated autonomously by the P3A's.

Ngadiluwih is one of the villages where the GDP set up two pumpwells which were afterwards run by autonomous P3A. Its population is 4,562, out of which 745 are farmers. Land use consists of gardens (156,065 hectares), irrigated rice-fields (112, 725 hectares) and dry cultivated land (8,420 hectares). The pumpwell irrigation system brought about apparent changes in crop patterns, crop systems and productivity, since groundwater was made available to supplement the surface water especially in the dry season.

The rate of illiteracy is high; 2,401 people are illiterate. A large proportion of the labour force are employed in the nearby town of Kediri. Most of the people are Muslims. In the course of the seventies various development programmes and organizations were set up, e.g. *Lebaga Sosial Desa*

(Village Social Association), the Koperasi Unit Desa (Village Unit Cooperative), Kredit Candak Kulak (Small Credit System), etc.

Between 1974 and 1976, two pumpwells were set up and operated by the GDP. In 1976 they were officially transferred to the P3A. By that time the P3A had already chosen its committee, freely elected by the members and consisting of ordinary farmers, and had adopted a number of regulations. With the transfer of the pumpwells from the GDP to the P3A the Ngadiluwih P3A was formally established through a resolution by the Regent. The Regent was given the status of 'protector' of the association, the subdistrict head was appointed controller, and the village head was chosen to be the supervisor of daily operations. Government agencies in the area were asked to support the P3A in any way they could, e.g. the Regency Irrigation Committee, the Groundwater Development Project, and the Subdistrict Executive Supervisor, etc. The Executive Agency responsible for the P3A's daily operations consisted of the village secretary, the Jogotirto as the distributor of water, the operator, the treasurer, and the chairman of the blok (a sub-village irrigation unit).

In 1978 a second meeting of P3A members was convened and a new committee was formed chosen by Resolution of the Regent. This new committee took the day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the P3A out of the hands of ordinary farmers, placing this responsibility mainly with the village authorities. Only the chairmanship of the blok and membership in the WVA were left open to the common farmer.

Farmers who need irrigation water have to submit a request to the chairman of the blok to which they belong. The latter notifies the distributor and daily executives who then instruct the operator to provide the water. The farmer pays for the water through the chairman of the blok.

Once a week a meeting is held between chairmen of bloks and the P3A committee, in which the former submit a weekly report of activities and the money collected from water users. Various problems are discussed (e.g. rise in the price of petrol, pay raise for the operator, etc.) and solutions agreed on.

The cost of obtaining water per hour/per hectare is Rp 250,- which includes compulsory saving (Rp 30,-), cost of energy (Rp 100,-), payment of the operator (Rp 50,-), fee for the committee (Rp 30,-), and other expenses. In addition, each member also has to pay an annual subscription fee of Rp 300,- per 0.25 hectare. This can be paid in installments every harvest season. It has been found that many members do not fulfill their obligation in paying the annual contribution.

As mentioned above it took two years for the GDP to introduce and popularize the pumpwell system before the whole operation and management could be transfered to the local P3A. During the two introductory years all operational costs were born by the GDP while the farmers got the water for free. GDP staff members frequently visited the villages in order to explain to the farmers the aims of the project, its implementation and the expected benefits. The village authorities were involved in this briefing process and trained for the tasks of organising and managing the system. The farmers also took part in these deliberations. When the scheme was explained, the majority of the farmers (65 to 72.5 percent; n = 40) were quite willing to donate some land to the irrigation system, while a smaller number (17.5 to 45 percent) demanded some restitution.

When the P3A stood on its own feet its existence was known by almost everybody (95 - 100 percent; n=40), while the rate of participation in blok meetings varied between 60 - 75 percent (n=40). Attendance at P3A meetings averaged 57.5 percent. 72.5 percent attended blok meetings for electing the blok chairman whereas only 52.5 percent attended meetings for electing the P3A committee.

From the interviews of water users it is apparent that almost all of them (95 - 100 percent; n=40) are determined to continue their participation in the programme. The few who dropped out explained that they had stopped tilling the land or that their land did not need irrigation. A few others hesitated in continuing their membership because the water could not reach their land or because they could not afford the costs.

In most cases P3A members fulfill the obligations and commitments of the scheme. Only in one village (Rejosari) was it found that members failed to pay the monthly contribution and to participate in cleaning irrigation canals. Participation in collective work on village infrastructural projects (e.g. repairing roads, cleaning canals, etc.) according to a survey of six Kediri villages was found to be very high, ranging from 65 to 92.5 percent (n=40). This can be explained by the strong tradition of communal solidarity in the villages, i.e. gotong royong or sambatan.

CONCLUSIONS

This historical description has shown the nature, forms, and capacity for adaptation of *gotong royong*:

1. As a manifestation of social solidarity, *gotong royong* exists in a village community where structural integration is dominant and functional integration has not yet reached that of an industrial community. With the changes in socio-economic circumstances *gotong royong* has made a number of adjustments, marking its shift from structural to functional integration. Its great potential lies in this capacity for adapting itself to various conditions.
2. The fine-imposing system in the *gotong-royong* system and in the community in general is an indication of a more organic form of solidarity being developed through a retributive law and this marks a shift from structural to functional integration.
3. A key element in *gotong royong* is the principle of equality - the equitable distribution of obligations without discrimination or exception, especially when the effort is directed at village interests. Strict sanctions serve to control all kinds of deviations.
4. Some forms of *gotong royong* have a structure resembling that of a modern organizational structure and all its functions are carried out more effectively and efficiently. *Arisan*, for example, in which members are paid for their labour contribution, is an adjustment to a monetized economy.

At this time of transition when the village community is undergoing changes, both as the result of development efforts and of the monetization and commercialization process, the morality of a village community plays an important role, especially in curbing the individualism inherent in monetization and commercialization. Collective consciousness can moderate the growing gap between rich and poor peasants. The concensus which still lives in the village community today should be used as a base for formulating new forms of solidarity. The spirit of gotong royong which is deep rooted in that tradition can be given new functions so that village solidarity can continue to exist and be used as the basis for improving the lives of villagers.

AYNI RUWAY: INDIGENOUS INSTITUTIONS
AND NATIVE DEVELOPMENT
IN BOLIVIA

by

Luis Rojas Aspiazu

THE NATIVE BOLIVIAN CONTEXT

Ayni Ruway is a programme designed for the native cultures of Latin America. In Bolivia, native cultures make up about 70% of a total population of 5 million. These include both the Aymara and Quechua peoples, who together constitute the largest proportion of the population. In addition there are the native workers of the mines and factories of Bolivia and minority forest peoples like the Tupi-guaranies, among others.

Ayni Ruway has mainly worked and spread throughout the Quechua world, which includes about two million people. The population of the Aymara is 1-1½ million, the forest people 200,000, and the urban population with a western-Spanish culture, around 1-1½ million.

Inside the Aymara culture, Ayni Ruway has been preparing the ground, stimulating and revitalizing actions for the emergence of an indigenous process of education and development based on its own cultural patterns.

The native population living in the territory which today belongs to Bolivia were victims of Spanish colonization from the 16th century on. In the second half of the 18th century, there were popular uprisings against the colonial system, the main one being led by Tupac Katari. Later on, the revolution of independence from Spain which started in 1809 favoured the urban Spanish descendents (the urban and feudal middle classes) rather than the subjugated native peoples.

Further history records other major events which, however, did not change the situation of slavery and oppression suffered by the native population who were continually harassed and exploited.

Only in 1952, did the "National Revolution" produce basic reforms: the abolition of the legal institution of peasant serfdom and the redistribution of the land formerly owned by the feudal landlords to the peasants. Despite these reforms and the gradual disappearance of the landowning oligarchies, the situation of the native majority continues unchanged. They remain in extreme poverty, their survival based on a subsistence economy and indigenous cultural values.

The development and education plans and programs are created in the cities. The major investments for development and education, amounting to millions of dollars in international credits and grants, practically disappear in the hands of bureaucrats and national and international technocracies without ever reaching the intended recipients, much less promoting instances of genuine and self-sustained development.

There is a wide gap between the city and the countryside, economic, social and cultural; the per capita national income is about 500 dollars. The poorest peasant population, however, has to survive with a per capita income of less than 60 dollars. It is in this context that Ayni Ruway started its activities about ten years ago with very scarce resources; that is to say, simultaneously having to get basic resources, to conceive the theoretical framework, to experiment with methodologies and procedures, and to train an efficient team of field workers.

BACKGROUND ON NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN BOLIVIA

During the last fifteen years in Bolivia, there have been experiments in non-formal education which have given priority to economic development, cultural affirmation, and the liberation of the native and exploited classes. Success has been rare, owing to the difficulty of moving beyond traditional methods and goals. The most notorious case has been "CEMA" (Accelerated Secondary Education) which started as a non-formal education project (dependent on the Ministry of Education) but which has, later on, turned into a way of re-introducing adults into schooled practices and goals. Another constraint has been the ideological or religious motivation of those persons or institutions involved.

The major non-traditional programs are the radio programs transmitted by "ERBOL" ("Escuelas Radiofonicas Bolivianas") with radio-transmitters in different points of the country, and using native languages: Aymara and Quechua. These non-formal education programs have tended to start under non-official auspices and have originated inside the Aymara and Quechua communities. The Ministry of Education was at that time receptive to these initiatives since it had created its own department of non-formal education.

In the Aymara sector, the Tiwanaku educational movement emerged as a major innovative experience. In the beginning it needed voluntary support from outside the community. Once it was on its own feet, it organized experiments and meetings on indigenous medicine, revitalizing the pre-columbian ceramics, and the use of written material in the Aymara language. The educational movements rooted in the native communities are distinguished by an absence of bureaucracies or top-down actions. There is also a healthy self-reliant attitude and a refusal to subordinate their objectives, principles and methods to economic support coming from state, private or international institutions.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL ROOTS OF THE AYNI RUWAY MOVEMENT

The remotest precedent one can find belongs to the beginning of the Republican Era. Simon Rodrigues Carreno designed at the time a plan of popular education which was vetoed by the creole aristocracy and the nascent bourgeoisie; Rodriguez was subsequently expelled. Elizardo Perez founded the "Ayllu" school movement based on the Aymara institutions, culture, and language. These schools lost their original essence and spirit, taking on a bureaucratic character once international aid organizations and the government bureaucracy interfered. Later on they gave birth to the schooling system of education for the rural areas.

The Ayllu (Community)

The primary indigenous institution is the Ayllu which is the foundation of the other institutions. The growth of the *Ayllu* from the "gen" or primitive tribe up to the hamlet and the Quechua state has given rise to other institutions and structures. In this study we are focusing on those institutions or structures which favour social communication around productive work and social conviviality.

The spirit of *Ayllu* and its material expression have been substantially preserved. The evolution might have come as a development of the family and the consequent loosening up of family relationships. The rules of social behaviour replacing those relationships soon became stronger and turned into major social organizations and rules of ethics. These are the *Ayni*, *Kawildo* and other systems of cooperative work governed by rules of reciprocity and mutual care. The *Ayni* has the greatest potential for self-reliant educational action, capable of dealing with large numbers and of fostering integrated economic, social, and cultural development. The practice of the *Ayni*, as educational fact, is the entrance in the rising spiral of social reciprocity; it means the repetition of the *ayllu*. One starts his education in the family and then goes on to the community, to inter-community action, and even to embrace the whole of one's own culture and inter-cultural relations. Besides, it is not a development of abstract knowledge and abilities but a growing exchange of goods among communities; it is a collective enrichment, a permanent gift-exchange, a real development, a vital process. The *Kawildo* is a socio-political structure formed by a Council made up of the major community or Ayllu authorities. These vary from eight to twenty-four members meeting once every month. The *Kawildo* favours and helps the educational process through mobilization and multiplication.

Native Languages

If one wants to discuss the native means of communication still prevalent, first mention should be the indigenous language, the basic element for the sense of identity and the medium of communication which makes possible the survival of the native cultures. Owing to its vitality, it has extended its influence even to the urban environments. Its survival, revitalization, and widening influence is the most reliable indicator of the failure of traditional schooling which has tried to downgrade native culture and replace it with western culture. Now educators are reevaluating and resurrecting native culture to the point of proposing, in the new order of priorities, the teaching of reading and writing in the indigenous languages.

Popular Festivals

Then we have to mention the "fiesta popular" (popular festival) which constitutes an unending world of motivation and meaning for educational communication. In the "fiesta popular", with its substratum of rituals and symbols, we find the roots and beginning of the most diverse forms of social communication: drama, songs, dance, games. The "native fiesta" follows the agricultural calendar and is conditioned by regional customs. It has to do with rituals of invocation for a good harvest and sometimes even rituals of propitiation; these help to reinforce social solidarity between and within communities. It also involves rituals to mark the beginning of distinct periods of life and existential situations; with change and sanctioning of new authorities; with the initiation and culmination of different phases of work; with the protection of cattle, the house, the fruits of the earth. The "fiesta" is a fountain of inspiration to encourage the educator to develop native forms of educational communication.

The Market

Another forum for popular mobilization, motivation and education is the "feria" or native market. Peasant groups of various regions and ages come together in one place wearing their diverse clothing, bringing their products, crafts, etc. In the "feria", where native values come to play, exchange implies the weighting of felt and proposed needs, in order to regulate the equivalent value of products.

Theatre

Developed as an educational medium by Ayni Ruway, the native theatre does not use pre-conceived scripts; it is created as a spontaneous reaction to the present situation yet molded by aged rituals. Each performance triggers discussion, which culminates not in a rigid scripted scenario but in a new and enriched performance. The various themes seem to express a single content and motivation: the individual's affirmation in the roles of his own culture and values. This theatre never uses its emotional and perceptive openness to pass on advice or moral lessons; rather, it paints characters affirming themselves in conflict-situations: rural-urban, rich-poor, individual-community, young-old, leader-masses. In fact, it develops skills of communication and coping ability and it unties knots of emotional life, helping to affirm the cultural identity of the participants while illuminating the contradictions experienced in their daily lives. This theatre, which is a by-product of the "fiesta", is not an elitist art; everyone and anyone has the right or obligation to act when the situation demands it. It is not a theatre for consumption; it is a theatre of participation and communication.

Song and Dance

As the theatre, the song stimulates the creation and recreation of verse, the "collective dialogue"; it is a challenge and a prompting to creativity. In the same manner, the dance is the culmination, the climax of the vital experience of living; it is a means of building and reinforcing social solidarity between communities.

Recapitulation

The above are examples of native structures, institutions and social processes which have not changed in their vital aspects since pre-columbian times. These are the basis upon which a non-formal popular education can be brought about without losing its indigenous character.

The native social means of communication, inseparably linked to the native institutions and structures, offer non-formal education resources which are now scarce in urban culture. Their use gives education a new center of gravity different from the empty verbalism, the transfer of dead knowledge, and the fabrication of artificial environments, of "modern" education. Education becomes a dynamic development of culture.

Non-formal education based upon these cultural patterns and with this methodology easily gains the support of official institutions in spite of its opposition to current educational and development trends and its having started as a marginal and unnoticed endeavour.

AYNI RUWAY: BEGINNINGS OF AN ORGANIZATION AND MOVEMENT

Ayni Ruway started about ten years ago in the context just described. Its promoters started discarding all the traditional models of development and education extrapolated from western development and the so-called developed countries. The starting point was the search for a method which was nothing more than a critical attitude toward communication and a re-encounter with the native cultures, their values, their technology, their more urgent needs, their forms of expression. At the beginning we were only two persons; soon it involved many others. The decisive group for the actual functioning of the system has been approximately fifteen persons with interchangeable functions. Our initial and continuing goal has been to unchain, inside the native cultures, a self-sustaining dynamic of education and development, free from external conditioning. Outside resources have included technology, diverse wills and skills such as those offered by the fifteen popular educators mentioned above.

To promote the improvement of the peasant economy implies the development of indigenous productive technologies; this was recognized as the most urgent need. In addition, the movement revitalized the native cultural traditions and values from the way of eating, dressing, etc., to aesthetic and religious expression.

Nowadays the Ayni Ruway system has established relations with the Ministry of Education; it serves as a pilot experience for organizing non-formal education in rural areas. Its principles and methods are spread through seminars, meetings and informal exchanges with others in Bolivia interested in non-formal education and development. However, the broad scope of the Ayni Ruway system and its capacity to generate its own resources and diverse support makes it possible to assert that it does not depend on a single specific source of financial support. The tapping of a wide range of sources implies a capacity for self-maintenance independent of external conditioning. It has its own system of craftwork and agricultural production and many shops to sell this surplus production. It establishes agreements on technical assistance and it gets, occasionally, loans and grants which are directed to new areas where the system extends.

Ayni Ruway, as it developed, is close to a self-governing system, with wide decentralization in making decisions and carrying out responsibilities. The role of the external team, which is composed of the most experienced and mature members, is precisely to facilitate the making of decentralized decisions and actions within a global vision.

The Ayni Ruway system started with no institutional help of any kind. It started as an experimental search for adequate methods and theory by the director of Ayni Ruway and the now dead Argentina philosopher Rodolfo Kusch.

It involved short trips to various regions of the Quechua and Aymara world: establishing informal relationships and friendly communication; participating in "fiestas" and domestic or special situations; assuming some compromises and making an effort to get the resources needed.

In this way, small programmes developed without resources, without a pre-established design; the organizers concentrated on the development of an appropriate method. The only starting point was a deep and sincere communication with the peasant communities. Even after Ayni Ruway developed the contacts to be able to tap major resources, the practice has been to act as if no resources were available. The object is to maintain the communication and cultural potential of the community as the foundation for the education and development programmes.

The groups which participate in the educational programme are groups of diverse age, sex, and social class, including the poorest communities. Around 18,000 persons participate in the Ayni Ruway system, either directly or indirectly, through an organization integrated into the normal life of native institutions and structures. What Ayni Ruway does is to strengthen and to affirm these native institutions.

Ayni Ruway does not organize groups or institutions other than those which should have existed where the cultures had not been interfered with in their development. It strengthens the functioning of institutions which already exist as part of communal life. It develops native technology which has been obstructed by the aggressiveness of modern technology. It is an indigenous technology, to be saved from extinction for its own sake and as a means of helping those most hit by modernity. The latter brings crisis to the peasant community causing an exodus. The development of native technology has the purpose of improving the subsistence economy and the cohesion of the community.

It is clear that the greatest incentive is the possibility of participating in social life and production, to be able to participate or express oneself in the life of culture.

THE MOVEMENT IN ACTION

Particip[illegible]

I[illegible]e cases where the programme responds to the needs of a particular sector or group in the community, it is watched, evaluated and supported by the whole community. Even if it seems to favour only a small group, the community as a whole feels favoured and with the right to evaluate the meaning and usefulness of the programme.

It is important that the natural leaders and authorities participate in the educational activity. They are skilled animateurs and can inspire their people. Normally they do not participate in specialized educational activity but they undertake tasks of major importance and responsibility. Since these authorities and natural leaders play a major role in running the programmes, they stimulate the continuing renewal and extension of leadership.

Another aspect that merits our attention is the exchange of educational experiences between communities, regions and cultures. An example of the latter can be found in the exchange and cooperation between Aymaras and Quechua. It takes various forms: sometimes it is a delegation of visiting educators who communicate through their own ways: theatre, dance, etc. The delegation is composed of all those capable of playing a role: linguist-educator, physician-educator, economist, etc. Finally, there are agreements and common programmes with other communities always trying to complement and strengthen each other.

There are no predetermined programmes for sexes or ages or subjects: the first contacts and educational activities decide the nature of the programme, which is often a reflection of the ecological and socio-cultural characteristics of the area. In one area where an educational programme was designed around craft production, the older women who dominated this activity also monopolized the educational programme. Later education was extended to other activities and to other social groups.

Often certain ages or sexes dominate. For instance, in weaving communities in the valleys the programmes involve mainly women--in some communities old, in some communities young women. In the mountain communities, however, the programmes largely involve the men. This is due to the fact that in those communities the climate is difficult, agriculture is hard, and there is little sense of a community--which really only consists of isolated hamlets. In all cases, as the programme unfolds, the various age groups and sexes begin to participate more actively.

The Ayni Ruway system stimulates the involvement of all age groups, sexes, cultures, occupations. It never starts with its own preconceived "target population". Its basic strategy is to start with remote native communities less influenced by urban culture. Starting there, it unites the community, integrates its culture, and neutralizes external pressures (e.g., the draft, school, consumer economy, etc.). It discourages migration and victimization by intermediaries (merchants). It also tries to bridge the gap between generations.

Ayni Ruway coordinates its efforts with those of private and public institutions. It obtains and gives support, channeling resources to native communities where necessary. From its philosophical and methodological point of view, it does not depend on any institution even though it is open to exchange, comparison and discussion of principles, procedures, achievements and experiences. It is particularly interested in sharing its ideas with other public or private institutions. Recently the Ministry of Education's Non-Formal Education Division opened the way for an educational programme along the lines developed by Ayni Ruway. In 1979, Ayni Ruway was invited to start the first Center of Integrated Education for Adults in the Quechua rural area.

Native Psychology and World View

In order to perceive and utilize indigenous media and structures to the fullest extent, it is necessary to understand native psychology or world view, distinguishing it from urban and modern psychology. In the native psychology there are dialectically united opposites, each implying the other; the urban psychology, on the other hand, presents them as real opposites to the point that there are major ideological or organizational efforts trying to unite them. The postulates of collectivism are a case in point: socialism, cooperativism, etc. A dialectic of these opposites could be arranged as: community - individual; solidarity - competition; life - death; totality - particularity; and wealth - poverty.

The effectiveness of educational communication can be achieved only by respecting the tension and dynamic determined by the simultaneous presence of opposites. It is impressive to see, during festival time, the coming together of groups belonging to different communities and Ayllus of the region. The war rhythms and clothes suggest a battle which in fact occurs after the introductory rituals. The fight is so serious that it frequently leaves someone dead but always ends in a fraternal embrace and solution among contenders. In other regions, the fight is symbolic, with bundles of flowers. This is the most important day of the year; the tension of all opposites has been lived at once. Every day, in lesser degree, Quechuas and Aymaras live this continuing tension of opposites resolved in an equilibrium, a harmony hardly ever understood by the urban and modern mentality.

People's Educators

The external team of organizer-educators is composed of no more than fifteen members; however, the indigenous organizer-educators are innumerable, since they are permanently emerging from the communities covered by the

Ayni Ruway system. In 1980 there were about 100 native or people's educators. They participate in the spontaneous life of the community, showing a great interest and vitality. They assume responsibilities entrusted to them by the families, the authorities, or the community assembly. Simultaneously, they participate in the meeting and life of Ayni Ruway. They attend the Ayni Ruway meetings in which the work is evaluated, plans are made, theory is developed, and methods and procedures are adjusted.

Through this educational praxis the native educator begins to understand the workings of his own culture. He also begins to get a deeper understanding of urban culture in order to protect himself from it or else, to utilize and adapt it. The native educators are the first to benefit from this educational action. Then they promote the participation of the rest of the community, in the cultural process released, through the creation of proper situations and environments.

The training of native educators takes place in life itself. Specialized information and skills involves a search for the wisdom and memory of the community which are sometimes lost or forgotten because of the invasion of western culture. The popular educators will promote natural educational processes, drawing on the skills of the elders, authorities, mothers, native healers, artisans, farmers--who are the natural agents of culture.

In Ayni Ruway there are no volunteers, since the Ayni and the cultural norms imply the concept of reciprocity. This is clearly expressed by the maxim: "today for you, tomorrow for me". However, reciprocal payments are neither measurable nor immediate; they imply qualified and postponed elements; the material aspect gives support to the cultural and spiritual ones.

The participation of external professionals, technicians, and university students is restricted to a minimum. The popular educators are expected to capture the outsiders' knowledge, skills, and technical expertise. The professionals stay only for a while, staying out of decision-making matters. On the whole they tend to be bad educators because of their narrow-mindedness, their inclination to bureaucracy, their permanent search for status, and their tendency to complicate situations in which they intervene.

The native educators are trained to capture this specialized knowledge which is traditionally monopolized by expensive professionals. At the same time, they develop their own skills and methodologies in certain specialized areas, without losing a global perspective. Among the native educators, there are linguists responsible for the promotion of native languages and also for the teaching of Spanish; others are specialized in health, administration, etc.

Native Media

There is archeological evidence showing that the indigenous native culture produced dummies made of ceramics which were supposedly handled as are contemporary puppets. However, Ayni Ruway has used and adapted the puppet technique from the outside, that is, the glove puppet. In the beginning of its operation, puppets proved to be the most effective medium of communication with the communities.

The puppets were accepted by the communities with certain modifications, the most important one being a bigger stage area and the provision of a larger number of puppets, since it is inconceivable to stage a play with only two or three characters.

The puppet show starts with dialogue but soon invites the whole family, neighbourhood, and community to participate. The domestic stage soon turns into the vast stage of the square. There should be a handy provision of dozens and dozens of puppets. In our initial performance a pre-fabricated puppet booth was used. But now this booth has been replaced by a curtain between trees or an open door, window, etc., which gives more room for the puppeteers behind the stage.

The puppets grew in importance by fully adapting native forms, content, and structure. Having unchained a greater interest in theatre itself, they were soon relegated to secondary status. The puppets would not only dialogue with people in the audience but would encourage the audience to come forward and operate the puppets themselves. Soon, they were all participating and the puppets had to step back. The puppet booth or curtain was soon an obstacle to be discarded and the puppet show would turn into a play with actors and theme originating in the public itself.

The preeminance of theatre in relation to puppets is partially explained by the fact that dance is a major element in native communication. If you asked the Quechua or Aymara to perform a fictitious dance, he would rather abandon the puppets and perform a real dance. This dance provokes the participation of the public and the emergence of songs. Of course, by pointing to this preeminance of theatre, we do not mean to say puppets are not necessary or have lost their place.

The Educational Message

A question arises here: what about the educational message? In native culture content is inseparable from form; the opposite thing would mean intellectualism and deceit such as that evidenced by the development agencies' puppets of the past decade, who died of congenital rickets while being born. These were puppets with forms, themes and techniques neatly elaborated, and were meant to teach peasants how they should preserve their products, kill roaches, plough their fields, etc. They underestimated the peasants' intelligence to the point of wanting to teach them how to be good workers or fathers. In fact, urban culture can only offer this as an educational message and as a projection of its own conflicts: themes about techniques and domestic morals.

For the movement, the educational message moves at a different level. The themes of techniques, morality, health, and many others cannot be ignored, just as the school, the military draft, the factory, the city, the developed countries, and so on cannot be ignored either. But they are reduced to a cultural attitude rooted in the world-view mentioned above. The question of technology, from the perspective of the non-formal education set forth here, is not a question of prescriptions as those elaborated by the development agencies. Rather, it is a question of the courageous will to survive as always before--with elementary technology. It is a question of authenticity and the creativity to reencounter and develop the wise technology of the ancient; it is also a question of ingenuity and strategy to seize modern technology without being exploited by technicians and alienated by consumer ideologies.

Wherever Ayni Ruway arrives, the native culture is reasserted. The educational message moves on the plane of contradictions and existential harmonies such as life and death, community and individual, etc. It is from this perspective of vital indigenous development that the historical conditioned contradictions inherent in a process of development and education must be faced (countryside - city, native culture - modernity, and tradition - progress).

Crafts as Educational Content and Media

Another form of educational action is the recovery and promotion of craft work. This has to do, in the first instance, with the value placed upon community-produced clothing. It also has to do with the individual's self-assertions, his personality as a group expression. Indigenous clothing is a differentiating assertion but also a medium of communication with other communities. In addition, it promotes a critical attitude toward standardized industrial products and modern values. Indigenous craft production also sustains the possibility of finding alternative forms of industrial production more humane than present ones.

Largely promoted by Ayni Ruway, the crafts serve educational as well as economic purposes through the exchange of products from different regions and places. Sometimes, they show symbols portraying particular customs, plants, or animals. They also include written symbols in the native languages. To stimulate interest and learning, each garment has attached to it a tag with the name of the producer, his or her community, and a wish or purpose. In a similar way the crafts communicate the voices of the ancients and of contemporary man to members of the community.

Education as Part of Life

As it has been suggested throughout this paper, Ayni Ruway encourages an education which is truly in, for and emerging from life. The means of education is not isolated from the people nor is it an alien technical product. It does include elements of formal didactic communication but these are integrated within the cultural framework.

For instance, we do not reject the use of chalk and blackboard nor do we reject the role relationship of teacher and pupils. What we object to is when environments with blackboards, chalk, etc., are restricted to those with formal education. Teachers, of course, are not the only ones with information and knowledge.

The community assembly, which is attended by all members of the community, is a meeting of special educational significance. It is there that basic precepts are established and revised, and relations forged between authorities of the same community and others. It is also the place of decision-making where agreement is reached on productive techniques and the organization of special celebrations. Often these community assemblies deal with immediate production or other problems; knowledge is shared and techniques developed which translate into practical applications of work and other action.

Only in abstraction can we really separate the on-going spontaneous life of the community from the educational aspect. In reality, they are intertwined. This non-formality is determined by the following:

- the absence of a special status for the educator;
- the presence of specialists only in certain circumstances;
- the refusal to separate theoretical from practical questions.

Consequently, we are far from postulating a formal educational system. On the contrary, education must adjust and adapt itself to the community's on-going experience and cultural life.

The Educational Role of Ayni Ruway as Facilitator and Catalyst

Up to this point emphasis has been placed on spontaneous educational processes of the communities. What is the part played by Ayni Ruway in the educational process?

The educational role of Ayni Ruway has been to integrate, develop, and promote the various aspects of community life: production, social exchange/conviviality, and ritual and artistic communication. Our educational activity contributed to:

- organizing healthy environments;

- developing production and its techniques;
- restoring the native ways of distribution and redistribution of production by eliminating or circumventing the intermediaries (merchants) and the formation of privileged strata;
- optimizing food, clothing, shelter and health care;
- communicating with other communities, regions and cultures;
- defending native culture from the aggressiveness of urban culture and at the same time preparing it to cope with urban culture without losing its own cultural identity;
- promoting indigenous structures and institutions: indigenous authorities, native educators, native schools, administration and technology of production, etc.
- promoting the use and development of the native language and alphabet;
- encouraging artistic expression and social communication;
- promoting the learning of other tongues and harmonizing them with the native tongue;
- teaching the use of modern technology and the skills for handling, restoring, adapting, and using this technology for the purpose of developing their own technology and culture (in, for example production, transport and social communication).

These programmes are in no way developed outside community life or favour persons external to the communities. They are drawn out of discussions at the community assembly. The decisions agreed on are left in the hands of native educators who design the programme and implement it.

Often the native educators are forced by necessity to learn new skills or knowledge in the course of implementing a programme. It is the same with the provision of tools, organization of learning environments, or the intervention of an urban specialist.

Evaluation

The evaluations of Ayni Ruway are continuing self-evaluations which help in adjusting its principles and methods.

The evaluations gather social, cultural, and economic information in a systematic way. But we do not believe in mechanical objectivity; we do not establish a special phase for evaluation, gathering of data, investigation. As experience and educational activity accumulates, so does data, out of which interpretations are advanced and conclusions are drawn for new experiences and actions.

The principles which guide our evaluations are as follows:

- The success or failure of educational activity must be seen as part of the whole web of achievements and reached objectives of a community.
- Evaluation of the results of educational action is only possible through communication and perceptions achieved in the course of such actions.

The mistakes, failures, or delays of action perceived in the evaluations are those of the Ayni Ruway team. Often communities have been frustrated by the contributions of professionals and technicians to the development of a native technology; this has made it necessary to elaborate a strategy for the "seizing" of modern technology by native educators, so as to use it in the development of their own technology.

The programmes in health, international marketing, and pottery development have not progressed because, in the first phase of Ayni Ruway, we had relied exclusively on the professionals and technicians: doctors, pottery-makers, economists, etc. In each case, rather than obtaining contributions, we had problems and delays. Now we have changed our strategy to that of harnessing the useful aspects of modern technology to contribute to the enhancement of the native one.

For the Ayni Ruway team, rather than problems and failures to overcome, it is a question of confronting difficult and important situations; so difficult that all the successful actions or all achievements can be said to have limitations, to have something of a failure. But from the point of view of the whole, each success or achievement, however limited, contributes to the further growth of the process.

A case in point is the successful organization of production and marketing of woven crafts in the valley of Cochabamba. The fact that we have not yet opened external markets for these crafts, which would increase production and income for a large number of families, constitutes a "weakness". Another weakness has been our failure so far to design a means for "quality control" (which would also have raised sales). But from the point of view of the total goals and the principles of Ayni Ruway, these two "failures" have their positive aspects. Opening foreign markets would have produced an imbalanced production of woolen crafts, the latter being tangential to social development and expression (art, cultural patterns).

It is possible that the slow but firm expansion in the organization of woolen garment production has contributed to its solidness, in contrast with similar organizations which experience severe problems and conflicts due to the critical situation of the national economy. In this very same atmosphere, the Ayni Ruway programme for woolen crafts is prosperous, due to its respect for the weaver's rhythm of life which is conditioned by the agricultural calendar. The development of craft production has not been the total programme but has gone hand in hand with the learning of organizational and communication skills and the development of other productive activities.

The formation of a department for design and "quality control" might serve to destroy indigenous cultural expression, unless carefully handled. These two objectives--foreign markets and a design department--will be pursued in the present phase upon solid foundations.

A different significance can be attached to the difficulty in creating a system for the marketing of agricultural surplus. Although our attempts have been unsuccessful, we have been able to see the elements blocking the way and which must be handled effectively: transport, prices, storage, and others.

CONCLUSION

The economic benefits, accruing to Ayni Ruway, are inseparably linked to socio-cultural benefits. The system is organized so as to be able to channel maximum economic benefits to the peasant communities through the following:

- the exchange of products between countryside and city, or among peasant communities, reinstating and supporting native circulation of products, thus retaining the communities and the benefits normally taken by the merchants;
- re-valuing the peasant surpluses by adapting them to the market, diminishing the cost of production, and opening new markets;
- raising production by a better selection of seeds, irrigation works, roads, etc. (made possible by the organized intervention of the communities with their own resources and techniques).

The educational value of Ayni Ruway is in the individual-group dynamic. It is meant to make the individual play different roles for the benefit of the social group, and the group to protect and promote the individual and his family. In sum, it is an affirmation of cultural identity.

We have already noted that those who benefit are the most oppressed communities and social groups, those whose situation did not improve even in the agrarian reform. One of the frequent problems in zones with great income differences is the control and manipulation of programmes by the most privileged. In order to neutralize these tendencies, experience has shown us that it is sufficient to strengthen the native institutions and patterns of culture.

The native institutions and structures--both economic and social--have proved to be decisive factors for education and development. Production ensures self-reliance and social protection; gift-exchange or the non-monetarized exchange of products between communities and zones.

The Ayni as an institution of reciprocity means protection, labour, cooperation. As an educational institution it precludes a "banking" relationship; it is, rather, an educational action involving mutual education.

Finally, drama and dance must be regarded as a powerful form of communication within a community and between communities. These are the native forms and institutions which provide a strong base for nonformal education. The experience with these institutions generate principles, methods, and a philosophy of education and development. What is not to be forgotten, however, is that it is not a mechanical manipulation of all these rich native elements but rather an approach from within. Therefore the methodological attitude of the Ayni Ruway team is decisive. It consists of permanently attempting to improve its capacity for communicating with the native world; its capacity for searching for and dealing with the world-views and categories belonging to native thought; and its capacity for re-encountering one's own cultural origins.

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CULTIVATING 'INDIGENOUS' IRRIGATION INSTITUTIONS IN RURAL JAVA: A STUDY OF THE DHARMA TIRTA WATER USERS ASSOCIATION MODEL IN CENTRAL JAVA, INDONESIA

by

John Duewel

INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

The island of Java has had a long and variegated history of peasant irrigated agriculture. Its irrigation systems vary in technologies, size, ages, agricultural cropping patterns, institutions, extent of local autonomy and relative water availability. A key irrigation policy question, which this paper indirectly attempts to address, concerns the capacity of peasant communities to develop, manage, and maintain irrigation at the community level.[1]

This paper considers current irrigation development strategies in Java, highlights the rich institutional/cultural heritage of peasant irrigation and proposes a conceptual framework for considering rural institutional change; examines the evolution and essential features of Central Java's Dharma Tirta water user association model; takes a selective look at two prize-winning Dharma Tirta studies in the field; and lays out 'lessons for transfer'.

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[1] This paper draws from research in process in the Solo regency of Java, being carried out under the auspices of a two-year Cornell University study entitled "Determinants of Irrigation Performance". Section I also draws from two other papers prepared by the author.

Review of Community Level Irrigation Development Strategies in Java

There have been two major patterns of irrigation development in Java. During the pre-colonial and early colonial eras, the development of irrigation systems was a community initiative; such systems continue to thrive in Java's mountainous interior.[2] In the late colonial and contemporary era, the state took primary responsibility for constructing the major infrastructure for irrigation systems - down to the secondary canal level. These latter technologically sophisticated systems often span numerous villages and administrative districts, and tend to be concentrated in Java's coastal lowlands.

Irrespective of the pattern of development, whether by local and/or state initiative, individual communities (and cultivators) have remained responsible for constructing and operating tertiary portions of systems. During the recent rehabilitation of Java's large lowland systems, this two-fold delegation of responsibility was followed.[3] It was assumed that the Javanese peasantry's legendary capacity to cooperate for group tasks (known as gotong royong) would ensure physical upgrading of community-level technologies. Substantial advances in agricultural production did take place. Government irrigation planners, however, have become impatient with the 'slow pace' of improvements in field technologies and irrigation management.

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[2] In and near to the inner core regions of the Javanese early inland kingdoms, the state took responsibility for constructing and coordinating major irrigation facilities.

[3] In selected areas the government established pilot tertiary units to serve as demonstration sites. In these pilot locations contractors built tertiary and quarternary canals. The irrigation bureaucracy made special efforts to channel water to these favoured locations. Frequently, however, after operational subsidies were withdrawn, field level structures deteriorated due to lack of maintenance, if not deliberate destruction. Moreover, the hoped for 'spread effects' largely did not materialize. Since cultivators viewed these locations as being specially favoured, their 'demonstration' value was limited.

Some observers argue that gotong royong and community leadership have declined. Others note that Javanese peasants are too strapped financially to provide the cash inputs needed for construction efforts. Socio-economic and structural changes in the rural sector, including high levels of population density and land shortage have accompanied differentiation of the rural populace, hindering an effective community response. Some critics point to the state sector itself, noting the rehabilitation efforts and irrigation management by the government are improperly carried out. In some districts a newly emerging rural elite - consisting of bureaucrats, holders of capital and village officials - invest in favoured portions of land only, neglecting if not blocking improvements in other locations.

The reasons for the 'inadequate' local response to tertiary development clearly vary among locales. Significantly, the government has abandoned its former 'hands-off' approach in favour of a more interventionist community level strategy. In theory the new strategy focusses on two interrelated and concurrent fronts - technological and organizational. Water users associations (or Perkumpulan Petani Pemakai Air - P3A) are viewed as the organizational answer to local problems. In practice, under the Irrigation Department's crash tertiary canal construction programme, it is an 'infrastructure first, organize later' strategy. The crash approach, a product of engineers and economic planners, emphasizes consolidating economic gains as rapidly as possible by relying on standardized administrative procedures and technologies. The government pays for the program, contractors execute it and the P3A are expected to take over subsequent local management.

This paper considers a variant of the 'technology-organization' strategy undertaken by the Department of Agriculture (DIPERTA) in Central Java, which substantially predate the Irrigation Department's crash approach. In promoting the development of Dharma Tirta water users associations, DIPERTA has consciously encouraged slower, more diverse and participatory patterns of organizational development which have drawn on community institutional, cultural and technological resources and knowledge. The Solo regency Dharma Tirta have consistently out-performed Irrigation Department promoted locations in bi-annual, provincial wide competitions.

Conceptual Framework: Cultivating Institutions

In a peasant society it may not be very useful analytically, or even possible to distinguish institutions and concepts that are 'indigenous' in a pure form from those that may have evolved in association with outside influence. The process of institutional adaptation and evolution, to the extent that it substantially arises from and incorporates peasant experiences, practices and perspectives, may be said to have an indigenous content. Accordingly, the term 'indigenous' will be applied to cultural forms and institutional practices that date from earlier periods as well as to local adaptations of externally introduced ideas (such as water users associations) that incorporate as well as draw from local knowledge and practice.[4]

In the context of this paper 'cultivation' is meant to suggest flowering, coupled with respect for the integrity and autonomy of the original form.[5] Indigenous social structures and customs deserve support and attention in their own right, irrespective of any 'development' ends to which they may be encouraged to flow. This is not to argue for a hands-off policy to indigenous institutions. In rural Java they are being buffeted by a variety of forces. External assistance and intervention may be helpful, provided that the net result is an enhanced rather than reduced community capacity to act in its own interest. The concept of 'cultivation' may be an appropriate framework for exploring the relationship between the external actor as cultivator and the community institution as plant, in the process of flowering and growth.

We can liken the role of the outside actor in 'cultivating' community institutions to the role of a Javanese peasant cultivating rice. At appropriate times water and fertilizer are provided to nurture the development of the plant (in this case a water users association). Experimentation takes place, within broad guidelines, to adapt cultivation practices to differences in soil, topography, water availability, financial resources, etc. Pest and plant disease control measures may be introduced, where needed, to provide protection. Ultimately, however, the process and timing of growth is contained in the seeds (read: indigenous experiences, practices, concepts). In cultivation, the role of the peasant is to assist the process of growth and flowering, not dominate it.

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[4] In the case of the Dharma Tirta, I would include only those locations where substantial local modifications or adjustments have been made in 'filling in' the general model--so as to accommodate local tasks, needs and traditions. This local adaptation and incorporation of existing practices is a common trait of most successful Dharma Tirta.

[5] I am indebted to a friend, Gregory Churchill, for the broad outlines of this 'cultivation' concept. Churchill elaborated this concept in a presentation to a Human/Legal Rights Seminar held in Washington, D.C., in late 1980. He currently is developing these ideas in a paper dealing with his experiences with legal rights programs in Indonesia.

The state's major initial function in 'cultivating' community institutions (in this case water users association) would be to provide a supportive, protective framework (through legislation, methods of assistance, policies) that promotes relatively autonomous, participatory patterns of growth. The framework should give breathing space, rather than restrict and overprescribe. It should attempt to create supportive conditions and to provide alternative options and guidelines, so as to encourage diversity and adaptability.

A protective strategy has roots in functions performed by peasant community institutions. Joel Migdal has argued that peasant institutions evolved 'social survival' or 'buffer' type functions to reduce pressures and uncertainties which might threaten community identity and existence.[6] Threats to community welfare might arise from natural factors, such as vagaries in weather patterns and floods. Or they might arise from man-made causes—including overdependence upon and integration into external market economies and politico-administrative networks.[7] By establishing local priorities and controls over behaviour, the institutional framework of the peasant community often has operated to reduce levels of external dependency and to preserve internal autonomy and capacity for action. In similar fashion, Central Java's Dharma Tirta combine technology and organization to structure action in irrigation.

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[6] Joel S. Migdal, Peasants, Politics and Revolution: Pressures Toward Political and Social Change in the Third World. (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton, University Press, 1974), Chapter IV, "Mechanisms of Survival". Migdal notes that such 'buffer' or 'social survival' institutions represented peasant community adaptations to various forces and pressures. Among other things these institutions (1) placed a floor to limit downward mobility, (2) a ceiling to set bounds on upward mobility, and (3) also attempted to minimize the outbreak of overt internal conflict so as to reduce the chances of outside interference and involvement in village affairs.

A second major role for the government (or external actor) in 'cultivating' water users associations concerns the generation and sharing of knowledge--specifically, the provision of alternative technological and organizational options for community-level irrigation development. Frequently, however, governments are hampered by the fact that knowledge generation in the organizational sphere takes place most effectively in 'live' peasant communities rather than in technology-filled laboratories. The latter lend themselves more easily to the kinds of experimental, controlled conditions preferred by scientists.[8]

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7. Joel S. Migdal, 1974, Chapter I. While products were sold in external markets, attempts were made to isolate the factors of production from control by market economy mechanisms.

8. Water users associations represent living peasant 'laboratories' that do not lend themselves easily to experimental manipulation. Associations have to articulate between peasant cultivators (who have differing soil, cropping, and socio-economic needs) on the one hand, and group interests on the other. Given such diversity, the tasks of irrigation management are often very complex. Government bureaucrats and engineers simply do not have the time, capacity or knowledge to adequately design and manage community level irrigation in a way that promotes efficiency and equity--unless substantial inputs come from cultivators and communities themselves.

There are, however, interesting parallels that can be drawn between the 'cultivation' strategy being advanced here and the experimental research techniques of plant breeders and peasants--both of whom cultivate plant varieties, experimenting with differing methods under differing conditions.

In the field of forestry management there is growing recognition of the value of promoting species diversity as a cultivation technique. A similar strategy of encouraging institutional diversity among water users associations could have important institutional experimentation and knowledge generation functions. To the extent that Dharma Tirta (or the more traditional village irrigator/ulu-ulu systems) evolve under differing conditions, they might be viewed as constituting an organizational gene pool. Encouraging local diversity also increases the chances that peasant customs and traditions, which represent a vast treasure of accumulated experience, can be incorporated into the newer 'associational' modes of organization--thereby perpetuating and expanding local knowledge and insight. An institutional cultivation strategy, thus, also functions to diversify, develop and expand organizational options.

The Institutional Resource Base: Traditional Agricultural Cultivation and Irrigation Management Practices

The following brief review is intended to illustrate the rich cultural institutional heritage of many Javanese communities in agriculture and irrigation. This heritage constitutes the original 'gene pool' from which the Dharma Tirta model has evolved.

From numerous sources it is clear that Javanese cultivators had evolved sophisticated agricultural production practices and indigenous irrigation technologies prior to the colonial era. In the 'natural' rice zones of Java's mountainous interior, cultivators developed hill-terracing technologies which were ecologically adapted to local conditions, and derived from experimentation and knowledge accumulated over centuries. In significant measure this knowhow in agriculture and irrigation was locally based and perpetuated. Each village had a local 'expert' who functioned in the dual role (from our vantage point) of agricultural advisor and priest.[9]

A second feature of agricultural production during this period was the popularity of an elaborate culture associated with rice production. Agricultural and religious/mystical knowledge were perceived as inter-connected. The 'rice-culture' incorporated indigenous Javanese beliefs and animistic practices as well as legends and characters from the Hindu 'high' culture. Agricultural and irrigation rituals, centering around (1) the belief in Dewi Sri, the rice goddess, who perpetually is reincarnated in rice plants and (2) local place spirits, continue to be practiced widely to this day--chiefly in the form of *selamatan* ceremonies which involve the communal partaking of food.[10]

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[9] Thomas Stamford Raffles, *History of Java, Vol. I* (London, 1817).

[10] For a description of the role of selamatan in Java, see Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), Chapter I and Chapter III to VII.

A third, interrelated feature concerns socio-cultural values which emphasized the close linkage between natural/physical, social and cosmological processes. Disturbances in one sphere, such as conflict over water, could lead to disturbances in another, such as the destruction of a village dam by a sudden flash flood. Javanese cultural values, therefore, placed a premium on maintaining harmony in social relations in order to perpetuate equilibriums with the immediate environment and the cosmos.

Javanese peasant institutions, which regulated behaviour in interrelated economic, social and cultural spheres, incorporated these values emphasizing mutual inter-dependency, balance and cooperation in social relations. Such values were well adapted to the organizational perogatives associated with rice production and irrigation management, which historically have involved cooperative patterns of labor exchange and mobilization. The term gotong royong is the single phrase most often used to characterize those institutional dynamics of village communities which emphasized communal solidarity. In a narrow sense gotong royong (or sambatan) refers to free provision of labor to assist neighbors in the performance of tasks requiring extra labor. In a broader sense, gotong royong (or kerja bakti) applies to tasks in the public domain where labor is mobilized collectively without compensation--such as constructing, maintaining and repairing irrigation facilities.

Given the close inter-connections between social structure, economy and culture in the peasant community context, it is not surprising that a combination of irrigation specific as well as more general (or diffuse) institutions and roles were associated with the performance of irrigation tasks. Most villages appear to have had a village irrigator (ulu-ulu) whose primary duty was to supervise water distribution. The ulu-ulu also undertook minor maintenance and repair of canals, and assisted in supervising labor gangs mobilized for major construction and maintenance tasks by the kebayan (messenger). Village religious officials helped to decide on the timing of agricultural activities and officiated at dam ceremonies and other agricultural celebrations. Finally, a formal or informal council of elders held ultimate authority over irrigation affairs.

THE DHARMA TIRTA WATER USERS ASSOCIATION MODEL: ITS EVOLUTION AND BASIC FEATURES

The P.A.S. Model as Forerunner to the Dharma Tirta Model [11]

Central Java's water users association model, or Dharma Tirta, did not start from scratch at the time that it was legally incorporated in 1971, but rather underwent a period of evolution over time. This evolutionary process is interesting for several reasons. First, it illustrates the experimental approach taken by government agencies involved in introducing technological and organizational changes to village level irrigation--in particular the effort to learn from the field by incorporating a wide spectrum of local ideas and practices. Second it shows how the dual emphasis on organization and technology, including the impact of the one on the other, became a central component of community level irrigation improvements.

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[11] The following comments on P.A.S. are drawn primarily from an anonymous article written in the early 1950's, and subsequently printed by the Department of Agriculture in Sragen in a collection of articles entitled Pengairan Pedesaan Dharma Tirta, 1974-75. The article is supplemented by field interviews.

The Dharma Tirta's predecessor, or P.A.S. (Peraturan Air Sukowati) had its inception in the early 1950's and reached its highest degree of development in the relatively water-short district of Sragen. P.A.S. came about as a direct response to a perceived need--open conflict over water during the dry season between villages. From the start, district authorities took a pragmatic 'feet on the ground' approach. Many of the district leaders, including the head of the Agricultural Extension Service, were young, well educated and dedicated men, having spent several years dodging the Dutch in Sragen's villages during Indonesia's fight for Independence. They had a more direct personal understanding of rural problems and capacities than do many bureaucrats today. In addition, the fledgling administrations had greater room for initiating their own programs than does the more highly structured bureaucracy of today.

Several of the major figures involved in formulating the P.A.S. model made trips to Bali to observe the living subak model first hand. From these visits, they selected ideas to introduce in two villages, on a pilot basis, which they later expanded to 50 villages. There was a deliberate attempt to keep P.A.S. procedures flexible so as to accommodate local conditions and needs. The regulations set up in each local community were the product of a dialogue between local technocrats, government and the community's entire assembly of cultivators.

The changes introduced through P.A.S. varied among communities. Several basic features, however, stand out. First, most villages upgraded the technical quality of their irrigation facilities by straightening canals and adding field level channels. Second, all communities created new irrigation roles by adding personnel to assist the village irrigators (ulu-ulu) in distributing water. The number of additional staff added, the extent to which they occupied permanent or temporary positions and the manner in which they were paid varied among communities according to local need and preference. Most of these assistants were assigned to specific physical units within the irrigation systems. Third, drawing from local custom, all communities formally stipulated irrigation infractions (such as theft of water, damage to irrigation structures and absence from obligatory kerja bakti work assignments) and appropriate punishments. Finally, reflecting the spirit of the times, democratic, participatory features which vested sovereignty in the hands of the rakyat (or more narrowly, water users) were viewed as the underlying principle of P.A.S.

In sum, the 'cultivation' approach taken by involved outside agencies during this early Dharma Tirta 'germination' stage encouraged local institutional experimentation, drawing from community resources, practices and wisdom.

The Evolution of the Dharma Tirta Model.

In the later 1960's the governor of Central Java came to the conclusion that a more activist approach to promoting farm level improvements in water management was needed. The governor requested the Provincial Agricultural Extension Service (DIPERTA), and in particular its 'Village Irrigation Division', to look into the matter and to come up with a plan of action--citing one stipulation. This stipulation requested that the transfer of water from the public sector level (primary and secondary canals) to the village irrigation network (pengairan pedesaan) be done via the desa village complex as a territorial unit.

In 1967 Central Java's DIPERTA started the first of now regularly scheduled bi-annual farm-level water management competitions (currently called Dharma Tirta competitions). Competitions begin at the district (kabupaten) level, expand to the regency level, from which the first two winners precede to a final provincial round. The top 6 winners of the 12 finalists from 6 regencies are ranked, and an award ceremony is held at the winning village. It is usually presided over by the provincial governor, and attended by representatives of the 12 finalists and their respective sub-district and district governments.

The bi-annual competitions stimulate intense organizational and technical development efforts in selected villages, and serve as a 'consciousness raising device' and organizational spur to the bureaucracy. Via documentation, field checks and interviews each association is judged on five criteria: administration and organization, water management, technical development, financial procedures and finally agricultural production practices. Special priority goes to those accomplishments which come from local initiative and self help (swadaya rakyat) by the communities themselves. The top winning locations at the provincial level are designated as pilot demonstration sites, and are provided an annual $120 to $170 subsidy for physical development, conditional upon inputs and progress by the local association itself.

In 1969 the Department of Agriculture's Village Irrigation Division staged a national field conference on rural irrigation in the village of Celep, Sragen--which had been the winner of Central Java's first competition just described. Among other topics, participants discussed the Dharma Tirta model on a preliminary basis--drawing from the P.A.S. experience and the first 1967 competition. Conference participants, accompanied by a number of village headmen, then proceeded to Bali for a 10-day post conference tour to study the legendary subaks first hand.

A second, 5-day conference was held at Celep for the district of Sragen in 1970 to present the Dharma Tirta model to gathered village representatives, and to get feedback. The conference participants included about 20 village headmen and their ulu-ulu (village irrigators) who previously had experience with P.A.S. The seminar broke-up into 3 committees, each of which came up with recommendations on a specific component of the proposed model. One committee considered organizational structure--including membership, leadership positions, duration of office and rights and responsibilities. A second formulated sanctions and penalties. A third considered finances, including fee collections and subsequent allocations. These recommendations were incorporated as guidelines for the local Dharma Tirta--leaving specific features of local Dharma Tirta statutes to the communities themselves.

In sum, the process of formulating the Dharma Tirta model took place over time, and involved discussions on a variety of levels. Most important, efforts were made to secure inputs from village officials (headmen and ulu-ulu) who had experience with the earlier P.A.S. model.

The Dharma Tirta Operating Guidelines and General Statutes

The Dharma Tirta 'Operating Guidelines' and accompanying 'General Statutes' (called Anggaran Dasar) were introduced via provincial decree in 1971, and then revised in 1975. The purpose of these general regulations is to establish broad operating principles and a general legal framework for organizational development. Membership and leadership criteria are defined on the one hand, and general duties and rights of members, officers and the government's 'sponsoring' agencies (pembina) are laid out on the other. The decree also adopts a 'wait and see' approach, stipulating that changes may be made in the future to add or delete items as needs arise. The general statutes wisely steer away from more detailed coverage of organizational methods and operating procedures, permitting local organizational variations in matters of detail. The Central Java approach, thus, does not fall into the trap of over-prescription. Rather, it approximates the protective/cultivation strategy outlined in the introductory section.

The operating principle of the Dharma Tirta is stated to be gotong royong --implying mutual cooperation and self-aid in the pursuit of the welfare of the community in general, and the farmer (petani) in particular. In the eyes of its sponsors the Dharma Tirta is viewed as a 'social' organization, not an 'economic' one. 'Business' related activities such as marketing and credit supply functions were deleted from the 1975 version. Its scope of activities encompasses all aspects of the control, exploitation, management, utilization and safeguarding of water and its sources which are defined as falling within the category 'farm level irrigation network'.

Dharma Tirta members consist of all cultivators who directly receive water within the territorial area encompassed by the organization. Rights and duties fall equally on all members, including the obligation to assist in construction and maintenance, to pay fees, to obey regulations, and the right to express opinions and vote. Essentially these rights and duties are defined in democratic terms.

All members have the right to be elected as officers, provided they command respect and have leadership qualities. The 1975 revised version dropped an earlier literacy criteria, but added a qualification. Dharma Tirta officers could not come from the ranks of the desa (village complex) officials. In theory this restriction gives the Dharma Tirta some independence of the village's official authority structure. In practice the requirement is not strictly enforced. Many desa follow the bureaucratic practice of appointing headmen as protectors or sponsors. This practice is in accord with 'traditional' views of the village headman as the father of the community.

The Dharma Tirta general rules make no attempt to specify leadership positions. The general duties of officers, however, are outlined. They include managing administration, overseeing an equitable distribution of water and planning--all in line with the Dharma Tirta's 'development' orientation. In line with custom, where Dharma Tirta interests overlap with those of the desa, the rembug (or desa-wide assembly) holds ultimate authority.

The Dharma Tirta regulations emphasize the importance of establishing viable local financial procedures, and grant individual associations the right to collect fees from members. Specific revenue sources are left to individual Dharma Tirta to decide. They include membership fees, special cash levies, provision of labor and materials by cultivators (called gotong royong) and fines.

Additional Technological and Organizational Features of the *Dharma Tirta*.

In addition to the legal framework's protective functions--which give breathing space to local, indigenously adapted patterns of institutional development--there are common technological and organizational features found in most *Dharma Tirta*. (For greater detail, see the case studies cited in the next section).

One of the major objectives of *Dharma Tirta* is to institutionalize norms regarding appropriate irrigation behaviour. While some of the rules may be new, the principles behind them are not--being rooted in indigenous peasant concepts and cultural values. Institutionalizing norms on a *desa*-wide basis is complicated by the fact that contemporary Central Javanese *desa* often are administrative amalgams of more 'natural' communities (hamlets), where face-to-face interactions dominate. Over time, however, the administrative authority and functions performed by *desa* have expanded as 'development' programs have proliferated at the community level. By hitching the Dharma Tirta to the *desa* administrative unit, Central Java has attempted to strengthen the association's authority and capacity to regulate water-user behaviour. This approach is preferred to creating competing spheres of influence. Although the *desa* administrative community may not be a 'natural' social one, the principle of matching the unit of irrigation authority with that of the community has indigenous roots.

Javanese *desa* vary widely in patterns of overlap between the physical layouts of their irrigation networks and their tiered administrative demarcations. What is clear is that the process of creating formal and informal organizational units, and of enforcing norms and rules regarding water user behaviour and maintenance duties, cannot be undertaken without attention to physical technologies and layouts. Technological and organizational processes are intricately intertwined. Technological mechanisms often function as the organizational 'teeth' to ease the task of social control. Since technological and organizational development frequently go hand in hand, communities deprived of their right to undertake the former are disadvantaged in the effort to evolve an organizational identity.

The interaction between technology, physical layout and organization is evident in Central Java's efforts to physically demarcate irrigation bounds between *desa*. Where *desa* share irrigation canals, each has its own separate gate, or turnout structure--thereby increasing its own autonomy and capacity to control water distribution.

From its inception the *Dharma Tirta* model also has incorporated additional specialists (or *pembantu ulu-ulu*) who primarily assist in water distribution, but who may also undertake routine maintenance and collect fees. In contrast to the *pengurus* (officers) who have *desa*-wide functional responsibilities, the *pembantu ulu-ulu* usually are responsible for specific portions of the irrigation system. The role of the *pembantu ulu-ulu* also has roots in the indigenous practice of providing temporary assistants to the *ulu-ulu*--although their functions are more formally spelled out under the *Dharma Tirta* format.

Finally, most *Dharma Tirta* form small water user groups (or *kelompok*), ranging in size from 10 to 15 hectares and from 10 to 40 cultivators. In theory the *kelompoks* constitute the organizational building blocks of individual *Dharma Tirta*, even though their existence and functions are not specified in the *Dharma Tirta*'s general regulations. In practice *kelompoks* vary considerably in the way they are organized and operated, and in the functions they perform.

The Dharma Tirta in Cultural Context—Symbols and Meanings

The Indonesian government and public pay close attention to the symbolic frameworks and forms associated with organizational innovations.[12] This fascination with symbolic meanings, although not unique, is a living legacy of the Javanese cultural tradition—found both among the aristocratic elite (priyayi) as well as the rural peasantry. It is not surprising, therefore, that the original sponsors of the *Dharma Tirta* took considerable care to formulate an appropriate title and symbol for the organization. Their aim was to create a symbol that could link Javanese cultural meanings to a new organizational form—to serve as a cultural, conceptual bridge.

The Javanese cultural tradition was selected as the most appropriate medium for the symbol under the following justifications. First, the original 'irrigation ancestors' were culturally Javanese. Second, the *subaks* of Bali serve as a living model. Under the popular conceptions, contemporary Balinesian

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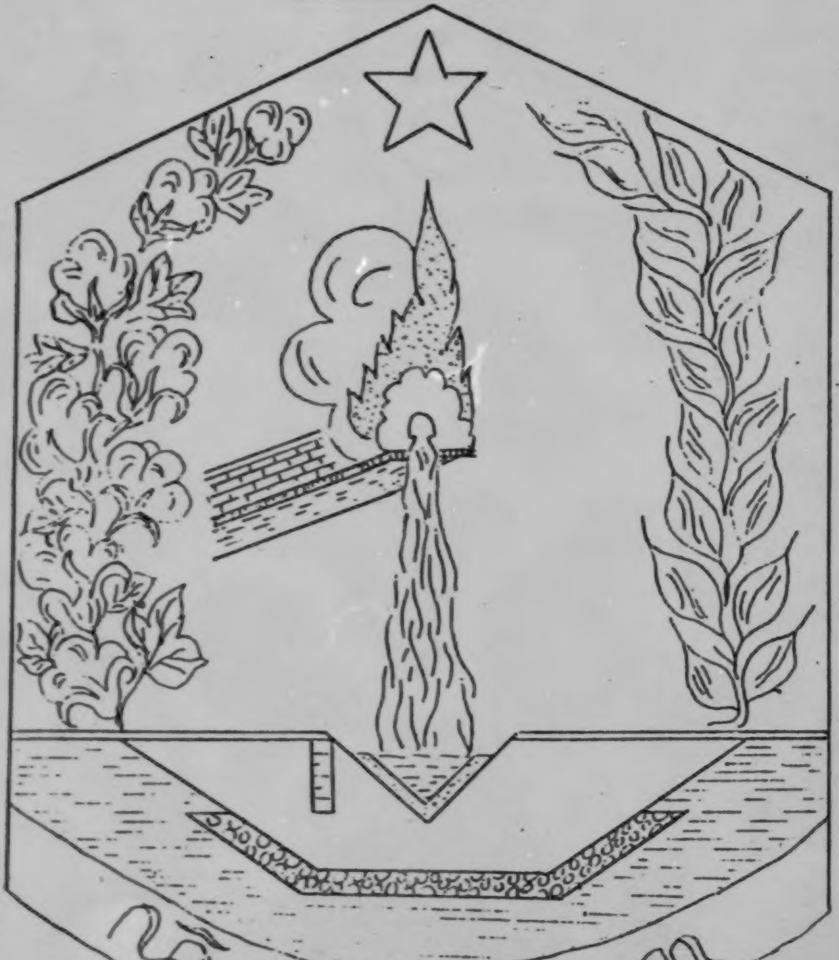
12. The importance of symbolism and numerology can be seen in Indonesia's national constitution, which is divided into 17 major sections, with 8 subsections, and 45 smaller units—to represent the Indonesian Independence day—17/8/'45.

THE DHARMA TIRTA SYMBOL



culture is viewed as being similar to ancient Javanese culture. Third, the Central Javanese locations that made the most progress in community irrigation management were *abangan* (culturally Javanese) communities.[13] Finally, the underlying conceptual values of the *Dharma Tirta* are quintessentially Javanese.

The term *Dharma Tirta* combines two Javanese words with Sanskrit linguistic roots. As interpreted by one of the organization's founders,[14] the emphasis in *Dharma* is upon social interdependency and service to the community. The term *Tirta* implies sacred water, as the gift of God, the management of which is undertaken for pure and noble purposes. Many of the original irrigation systems in Java were located in mountainous regions. Their water sources frequently comprised sacred mountain springs and streams. Since the Javanese have always viewed mountains as mystical (*angker*) regions--as the abode of gods, spirits and mystical ancestors, the sacred associations of mountain water have been linked to the *Dharma Tirta* title. In short, *Dharma Tirta* suggests 'provision of sacred water, via human effort and labor, in service to community and society'. As its major sponsor notes, the title deliberately has 'magical and philosophical' connotations, designed to appeal to the peasant imagination.

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[13] Clifford Geertz has popularized the distinction between the *abangan* cultural tradition (or primarily village level, folk Javanese cultural variant, combining animism, Hinduism, Islam and other elements) and the *santri* (more orthodox Islam) variant. See Clifford Geertz, *Religion in Java*.

[14] The comments in this sub-section are drawn primarily from correspondence by Sukotjo Harmoni, head of the Land Conservation and Water Management Section (formerly *Pengairan Pedesaan*) of Central Java's Agricultural Extension Service to Effendie Pasandaran of the Department of Agriculture, Jakarta in March 1974. These are reprinted in *Pengairan Pedesaan Dharma Tirta*, 1974.75--prepared by Sragen's Agricultural Extension Service.

In similar fashion the indigenously crafted Dharma Tirta symbol incorporates 'magical, historical, sociological, philosophic, economic and technical' elements. The meanings of the symbol's component parts are as follows:

(1) The symbol's overall shape is that of a pacul, or Javanese digging device in widespread use, which represents traditional technologies for agricultural cultivation.

(2) The five pointed star at the top signifies belief in God, the first item of Indonesia's state philosophy (Pancasila).

(3) The rice and cotton stalks on the two sides of the symbol represent prosperity and the spirit of freedom.

(4) The flame-type shape (or wahyu) in the middle of the symbol represents the source of the Serayu river, the largest river self-contained in Central Java. Its source lies at 2,000 meters altitude in a sacred, mist-shrouded mountain plateau, adjacent to the Dieng complex of temples. The magical 'wahyu' is called Bima Lukar (literally 'Bima naked'), and signifies the penis of Bima, one of the five Pendawa mythical knight warriors. According to popular Javanese legends, the Serayu river was formed by Bima's vital organ which dragged as he walked through Central Java's mountainous interior.

(5) The elongated structure which leads to the Bima Lukar represents drainage channels (known as urung-urung Asworomo) which dry the Dieng complex of temples. These drainage channels were build in the 8th and 9th centuries. They represent early irrigation activities undertaken by Javanese ancestors.

(6) The water falling down from the drainage channel represents sacred water used for agricultural purposes, via irrigation.

(7) The technical device at the bottom of the symbol portrays a concrete Thomson weir commonly constructed in Dharma Tirta at the plot inlets to cultivator sawahs. It represents a new, simple and appropriate form of technology designed to improve water distribution efficiency and equity.

(8) The inscription at the bottom of the symbol spells out 'Dharma Tirta' in Javanese Sanskrit script--a script with mystical associations.

In sum, the Dharma Tirta symbol is designed to portray values and concepts in a form culturally understandable and appealing to peasant water users.

SELECTED FEATURES OF DHARMA TIRTA IN ACTION

We will now turn to examples of the use of technology and organization drawn primarily from two Dharma Tirta studied intensively in the field. Bima (in the district of Sukoharjo) and Tayuban (in Sragen) are prize-winning Dharma Tirta--although both differ substantially along a variety of traits. They share in common the capacity to weld local experience and knowledge to new technological and organizational modes.

Local Agricultural Knowledge

Both Bima and Tayuban turn out three rice crops a year in over 50% of their irrigated sawahs--a feat in part made possible by the usage of high-yielding varieties and other advanced cultivation and water management techniques. Interestingly, they also resort to traditional cultivation techniques to minimize risks and to increase the speed of turnover between cultivation sequences.

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15. Bima and Tayuban are pseudonyms for two villages being studied.

Under the kretekan seed preparation method, Tayuban cultivators start seedbeds in advance of the wet season rains, when water supplies may still be scarce, to get a 'head-start'. Under the walik jurame land preparation method, soils are turned over after the first wet season crop using hand-held digging devices (cangkul), without plowing. Both of these traditional methods function to advance the time when the third rice crop can be transplanted, thereby lessening the risk of crop failure or yield reduction during the critical, water-short dry season. In the process these methods increase the efficiency of water use.

In both Bima and Tayuban, detailed knowledge of variations in soils, including their water-carrying capacity, is a key element of community irrigation management strategies during the dry season. Some pembantu ulu-ulu in Tayuban have had 30 years experience in delivering water to rice plants under differing conditions--dating back to P.A.S. The village headman and ulu-ulu in Bima can discuss soil differences down to 3 hectare units. Without this knowledge, the persons occupying various irrigation roles in the Dharma Tirta structure would not be able to secure the confidence of cultivators, much less achieve the levels of water use efficiency that they attain.

Leadership Roles and Criteria

Both Bima and Tayuban have formal leadership positions in their Dharma Tirta structure geared to specific functions. These formal functions, however, do not always approximate the roles played by the association officials--which tend to have a more 'traditional' bent. In Bima, for instance, the Dharma Tirta pengurus (officials) are 'nominated' by the headman (in consultation with other desa pamong), from petani maju (progressive farmers) who are also orang kuat (influential persons). It appears that their chief function is to represent all geographical locations (hamlets) within the irrigation systems. They thus provide the lurah (headman) with influential cultivators who can be called on when needed, and who can function in traditional roles as opinion leaders. The lurah, himself, is a man dedicated to his community who can comfortably straddle two worlds--the world of the development-oriented, 'modernizing' bureaucracy and the world of the rural village. The lurah has travelled overseas, is highly respected by provincial authorities and can discuss balance of trade theory in simple terms when explaining why the petani are being asked to cultivate tobacco. At the same time he can also perform such traditional functions as arbitrating family division of property and advising peasants on propitious cultivation times derived from Javanese agricultural numerology.

A major element in the irrigation management achievements attained by Bima and Tayuban has been the fact that the community has largely controlled the processes of determining and filling local irrigation positions. Since irrigation systems are also agricultural systems, critical roles are primarily filled by persons familiar with agriculture, as a minimum criteria. Villages also appear to have an indigenous concept of internal leadership mobility based on service to the community, called 'perjuangan' (literally, to struggle). These community routes to higher positions are like apprenticeships--enabling specific individuals to gain requisite local knowledge, develop leadership abilities, and accumulate respect and authority before assuming major responsibilities. The capacity to institutionalize new roles and operational norms in Dharma Tirta in significant measure depends on the quality of personnel initially filling those positions.

Technology and Organization: Community Strategies.

Both communities attempt to match technology and organization to accommodate differences in soil, topography and changing water supply conditions. In Bima the kelompok units, which average 13 hectares and 40 to 50 cultivators in size, have been broken down into sub-units 2 to 4 hectares in size and with 8 to 15 petani. Each sub-unit has its own distinct quarternary canal, including turn-out. This sub-compartmentalization of techno-organizational units enables Bima to disaggregate rotational groupings when tight water supply conditions so demand, and aggregate them when water constraints ease.

Bima also follows the interesting practice of lining (with cement) only those sides of tertiary and quarternary canals which border cultivator plots. Doing so approximately halves construction costs. The purpose is not so much to reduce water loss from seepage as to control the access points (concrete V-shaped Thomson mini-weirs) where water enters cultivator plots.

Both communities have pursued a phased approach in upgrading their irrigation technologies--instituting systems of annual incremental improvements. This long range phased technological development strategy takes into account cash availability, relative need, cultivator capacity and most important--the need to secure consensus in decision-making from cultivators in locations slated for improvement. Consensus usually precedes rather than follows action (in contrast to the Irrigation Department's approach), thereby helping to insure that subsequent commitment to the change will be forthcoming. This phased approach also encouraged petani inputs based on working knowledge of field conditions and social boundaries, thereby incorporating an 'indigenous' content and improving chances that technical changes can be operationalized. Often villages initially establish pilot locations when introducing new concepts so as to ease the task of acceptance and to permit experimentation. Quarternary canals, for instance, ordinarily employ earthen embankments when initially constructed. Lining in concrete takes place normally only after the 'bugs' have been worked out, so as to minimize error and increase acceptability.

In each of the examples cited one can discern efforts to evolve local solutions to technological-organizational problems which incorporate a high 'indigenous' content.

Institutional Flexibility

In both Bima and Tayuban there are organizational differences in the management of water distribution between wet and dry seasons linked to changing relative supplies of water. Both communities institute tight controls over water allocation during periods of water shortage and relax them when water supplies increase. In Bima under the Dharma Tirta, strict rules go into force during the dry season, which forbid petani from opening or closing their plot intakes. These intakes (tulakan) in effect become Dharma Tirta public property, and are operated solely by the pembantu ulu-ulu. The Dharma Tirta manages demand by practicing simultaneous planting within sub-rotational units, and staggered planting between such units. When water supplies increase relative to demand, the petani regain the right to handle water entering their plots in accord with individual preferences. In short, the *Dharma Tirta* imposes tight social control over water distribution which requires more labor intensive modes of management by the *pengurus* and *pembantu ulu-ulu*) only when the need for such controls is evident. This pragmatic policy makes it easier for *petani* to accept the imposition of regulation, and therefore the legitimacy of *Dharma Tirta* operating procedures and norms.

The flexibility of organizational arrangements is evident in the way Tayuban maintains its canals (which has roots in traditional practices). Primary and secondary canals are viewed as belonging to the government, tertiary canals to the *desa* and quarternary canals to the cultivators who receive water from them. Since tertiary canals fall under the public domain, all households--be they cultivators or not--contribute male labor on request in the form of *kerja bakti*. The *bayan* continue responsibility for mobilizing manpower under supervision by the *ulu-ulu*.

At the quarternary level, by contrast, individual *petani* maintain canals at their own initiative--with periodic prods by the *ulu-ulu*. Each cultivator is responsible for cleaning the section of the quarternary channel which passes the end portion of the plot immediately upstream from his/her own. In this way the group interest in ensuring that quarternary canals are cleaned of weeds and debris is matched with the individual *petani*'s private interest in seeing that water reaches his/her own plot without being unduly delayed, or sidetracked.

Both examples cited here illustrate the institutional flexibility and organizational fine-tuning which enable individual *Dharma Tirta* to accommodate changing conditions, and to balance private incentives with the social good.

Financial Procedures   The financial resources used to support technological development and ongoing operation of Dharma Tirta come from a variety of sources. These include government subsidies, village treasury funds, membership fees, 'greening' efforts and special assessments. Several basic features are noteworthy.

First, the size of membership fees collected seasonally to support ongoing Dharma Tirta operations usually reflects the difficulty of tasks to be performed. Fees tend to be higher during water short periods. Such fees are collected only from cultivators (either owners or tenant operators) who directly benefit from organizational activities. The pembantu ulu-ulu, who function as the Dharma Tirta's field leg-men, receive the lion's share of funds collected. The proportional share frequently is higher in locations where work is heavier. Second, special financial levies assessed to support long term technological investments and upgrading fall on the owners of plots in units undergoing improvements. In accord with custom, owners also often contribute labor and materials.

In sum, the distinction between operational activities and those of a longer term, more permanent character--including the breakdown of financial responsibilities between owners and cultivators--illustrates the principle that those who pay should be those who benefit most. We again see the pragmatic attempt by individual Dharma Tirta to formulate working definitions that can accommodate specific local needs and conditions--rather than lay out rules on an 'a priori'basis. Undergirding these local solutions to organizational tasks we encounter 'indigenous' conceptions of what is fair and workable. For 'institutional cultivation' to flourish, individual Dharma Tirta should continue to have the right to evolve their own associations in accord with local custom and tradition.

Irrigation Related Rituals and Cultural Practices Given the peasant's perception of interdependency between ecological, social and cosmological processes, it is not surprising that elements of Java's 'rice culture' continue to be practiced. The belief in Dewi Sri, as goddess and incarnation of the rice spirit, constantly going through cycles of regeneration in individual rice plants, has a particularly strong fascination in the Javanese peasant mind. In mountain communities a substantial majority of cultivators perform rice related ceremonies at their tulakan (sawah inlets) during seedbed and land preparation, transplanting, flowering and just prior to harvesting. In Bima and Tayuban such petani-initiated ceremonies continue to be widespread --coexisting with improved agricultural practices and technologies.

The beliefs associated with the 'rice cult' have beneficial functions which extend beyond mere 'cultural preservation'. This is exemplified by the small ani-ani, the dominant harvesting technology in Bima and Tayuban, which is cupped in the palm of a single hand and used to cut individual rice stalks, one by one. According to traditional beliefs, by sodding the intent of the female harvester is disguised, thereby not frightening Dewi Sri, and thus encouraging her to return to the field again. Since the ani-ani method of harvesting is a labor-intensive one, its perpetuation in land crowded Java is linked to social norms which emphasize concern for the group, and responsibility for preserving employment opportunities.

In contrast to rice ceremonies performed by cultivators themselves, group initiated ceremonies usually demand leadership and informal organization. Among group ceremonies that continue to be practiced in lowland communities, the annual bersih desa (literally 'clean the village') and hamlet sacred shrine ceremonies stand out. Once or twice a year all male members get together for a selamatan ceremony (usually involving communal sharing of food) at the hamlet's sacred shrine (or tempat keramat) where the dhanyang (or original hamlet founding spirit/ancestor) is believed to reside. By linking the hamlet to its ancestral core, the moral and mystical underpinnings of social institutions and norms which emphasize hamlet solidarity are strengthened.

Many of the hamlet shrines are located near sacred waringin trees and natural springs. Cultural norms and sanctions frequently prohibit tree-cutting near the tempat keramat. One frequently sees thick groves of bamboo and trees surrounding mountain springs, where mountainsides otherwise have been denuded of trees. These beliefs, thus, help to preserve water sources (mata air) which irrigate rice terraces and gardens and which provide drinking and bathing water. In such cases, 'indigenous' mystical beliefs derived from animistic practices function to preserve ecological balances and protect sacred water supplies.

Finally, while group related irrigation ceremonies have largely disappeared in lowland communities, they continue to survive in the mountains. The kirim dawuhan (or dam) ceremonies take place once a year on a special day early in the rainy season. They involve communal repair of the stone mountain dams, sharing of food, prayers and bathing of a sacred rock. The bayan, ulu-ulu and village religious officials all participate. Brief discussions of cultivation plans and petani obligations in irrigation tasks often take place. The whole affair proceeds in a somewhat free-flowing informal fashion. The emphasis is on mutual inter-dependency and equality in sharing irrigation tasks (symbolized by the communal partaking of food) and upon the mystical/moral roots of agriculture and social union.

LESSONS FOR TRANSFER

In this section we will briefly outline selected aspects of the Dharma Tirta experience which may have implications for other settings.

General Administrative Strategies

The 'protective' strategy pursued by Central Java's provincial government (in promoting Dharma Tirta) guaranteed the association's legal right to exist, broadly defined the Dharma Tirta's relationship to higher level bureaucratic hierarchies, established procedures for channeling feeder funds to communities, and laid out general operating principles. Most important, by not over-prescribing organizational and legal provisions, provincial policies encouraged local diversity and experimentation. A number of lessons can be derived from this experience.

1) In the early stages of any program to promote the development of community institutions, external agencies (including government) need to formulate working procedures that function to stimulate rather than to smother local initiative.

2) When administrative and legal procedures are established, they should be viewed as provisional and subject to amendment. Institutional development, both at community and higher administrative levels, occurs more effectively in an evolutionary rather than pre-ordained fashion.

3) Counter-part agencies which function as sponsor/trainers should have not only technical skills to offer, but also field-level working experience (as was the case with the Department of Agriculture in Central Java).

4) The locus for programs to support community institutional development should usually be centered at provincial and district, rather than national levels (other than national, co-ordinating, feeder roles). There is often more room for bureaucratic creativity and innovativeness at lower administrative levels, coupled with sensitivity to local/regional characteristics and traditions. Administrative decentralization is consistent with the 'gene pool', 'promotion of diversity' strategy.

5) Local/regional governments should be given financial/administrative flexibility (or operating leeway) to initiate and experiment with institutional change at the community level, rather than automatically follow national models.

6) In the early stages of a program, a pilot approach to selecting and working with prospective sites should be pursued, consistent with the experimental strategy outlined earlier. To encourage the applied research value of pilot activities, sites should be selected to represent differing ecological, technological, institutional and agricultural features.

7) Assuming that agencies/government have financial/personnel constraints, feeder funds and techno-organizational assistance could be targetted to selected districts and sites in early program phases. Criteria for selecting 'target' locations should take into account (a) demonstrated need and interest at the community level, (b) previous experience and/or achievements and (c) local administrative backing and technical proficiency. As a critical mass of

local organizations develop, there will be improved prospects for spread effects to neighboring communities.[16]

8) The bi-annual Dharma Tirta competition format is a useful model. The competitions have been valuable forums for raising the 'consciousness' of village leaders, technical personnel and government authorities regarding the Dharma Tirta's merits.

9) Selecting 'demonstration' sites from competition winners and other communities, should provide geographical, socio-cultural, ecological and technological variation. An individual Dharma Tirta's 'demonstration' worth is higher if it is a product of local endeavour under 'normal' conditions--rather than a specially favored site developed through 100% subsidies.[17]

10) Community institutional development does not lend itself well to the packaged, fairly rigidly structured agricultural extension models currently in vogue among international organizations.

11) Systematic programs of grounded research could help generate case studies from successful community adaptations of institutional models. Research should not be limited to sites which are consciously undertaking organizational change, but also include communities using more 'traditional' organizational methods.

12) There is a major need to incorporate such field level case studies into extension materials to illustrate alternative techno-organizational

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16. Such spread effects have taken place in two districts in the Solo regency, which have consistently turned up the 1st and 2nd place winners in the 7 bi-annual runnings of the province-wide Dharma Tirta competitions.

17. See footnote No. 3.

options. Promoting such horizontal, 'nuts-and-bolts' cross-fertilization among communities should help bridge the gap between techno-administrative concepts of how water users associations function in theory, and the reality on the ground. Communities can more easily take the step of drawing from their own practices and custom once they have seen how other communities have done so in a concrete, detailed fashion.

Community Level Strategies

The following comments consider community level strategies to develop technologies and organization rules. They apply also to the approaches used by external actors who want to assist this process of techno-institutional change.

1) At the community level, technological and organizational development take place inter-dependently over an extended period of time. External participants should learn to adjust to local rhythms and pace, rather than imposing their own bureaucratic time-frames.

2) The phased local development approach is in part dictated by financial constraints. Just as important, it reflects the need to secure social consensus before, rather than after, actions take place. It encourages cultivator participation in early decision-making and in construction, and helps to secure subsequent commitment to upkeep (both technological and organizational). This link between early participation and subsequent commitment is a critical component of any strategies to encourage rural change.

3) As a strategy to ease the task of securing consensus, and to 'work the bugs out' of techno-organizational innovations, communities commonly confine such changes to pilot irrigation sub-units. This pilot, experimental approach encourages discussion, helps tap local knowledge, practice and custom, improves cultivator inputs and the resulting product, and operates as a 'safety valve'.

4) If external actors want to encourage lasting and participatory approaches to techno-institutional change, and to develop good working relationships with the local populace, they need to plan longer-range, more phased patterns of involvement. There is a time lag between the planting of ideas and their subsequent germination and growth.

5) Outside programs of assistance to water users associations could initially start at pilot locations within communities, and then later expand as introduced changes take root. As a strategy this approach may be slower and more labor intensive in the short run, but clearly more productive over the long haul.

6) In land crowded rural Java, community financial constraints often act as barriers to improvements in institutions and technologies. In such situations, governments should attempt to improve the financial capacity of communities to act independently of external initiatives.

7) Policies which give communities greater discretionary control over resources should lead to more productive usage of funds in the long run. Tayuban can mobilize operational funds because these funds are handled internal to the community, are for services rendered and are flexibly administered.

Cultivators can see the direct link between their inputs (cash) and outputs (efficient and equitable water distribution).

8) When considering the potential role of local custom and practice in techno-organizational development, it is necessary to probe the socio-cultural values which undergird institutional forms (including the extent to which they can be adapted to alternative usages without being undermined).

9) All successful Dharma Tirta steer a cautious course between balancing individual interests and autonomy with group interests and control. Tight social control is imposed only when conditions, such as water shortage, so demand. Cultivators will submit to group control when it is viewed as necessary, and fairly administered. Organizational modifications which do not take into account such pragmatic and flexible features of 'indigenous' peasant institutions, run the risk of being rejected.

10) Traditional cultural rituals and ceremonies (such as the rice field selamatan) often coexist side-by-side with advanced agricultural techniques. Such indigenous practices reaffirm the 'spirit' or inner-core of relations between fellow community members and the environment. They often facilitate rather than block local adaptation to changing conditions and needs.

11) The manner in which communities match organization with technology under the Dharma Tirta format illustrates their 'common-sense' approach to social control. While appeals are made to the 'gotong royong' ideal of harmonious intra-community relations, in practice communities must take into account differing interests between upstream and downstream cultivators, and between landlords and tennants. The calculated use of technology and layout

functions to provide the physical means to implement organizational rules.

12) The process of selecting persons to fill new or modified roles which accompany organizational change should be left in community hands. Institutionalization of new rules and roles takes time and can occur more effectively if the persons who initially fill those roles command respect and authority. Persons selected according to 'traditional' criteria often can more effectively 'break-in'new roles than those selected by more 'modern' criteria, such as educational background.

13) In sum, communities should be encouraged to make their own institutional and technological adaptations to general organizational models being extended. In this way local traditions are less likely to be co-opted for externally defined ends but rather strengthened to take on new tasks. Tapping indigenous knowledge increases the chances that 'cultivation' will take place, and that institutional ('genetic') diversity will be promoted.

TRADITIONAL MODALITIES OF PARTICIPATION AND SELF-DEVELOPMENT

The Utilization of Indigenous Age-Set Groups to Promote Rural Development in Upper Volta

by

Bernard Lédéa Ouédraogo and William M. Rideout, Jr.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Roughly 150 miles south of the great northward bulge of the Niger River, Upper Volta encompasses 274,200 square kilometers of rolling savanna type terrain. With Mali to the north and Niger to the east, Upper Volta is cut off from the ocean to the south by Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo and Benin. Given a per capita GNP of US$130 in 1977, Upper Volta is one of the poorest countries in Africa and has been classified by the United Nations as one of the 25 "least developed countries".[1] Over 90% of the population live in the rural sector and their livelihood depends upon agriculture and livestock. Constraints to development of the agricultural sector include extreme variability of rainfall, generally poor soils, limited infrastructure, a shortage of skilled manpower, and a population, presently estimated at 5,500,000, increasing at about 2.2% annually which is unevenly distributed with regard to available land resources. The adverse impact of the drought from 1968-74 reduced real GDP to approximately 2.5% per year and since the drought per capita income has practically stagnated. From the most southern portion of the country the average rainfall of 1000-1400mm gradually decreases to 300-700mm in the extreme north. Nearly two-thirds of the population is concentrated on the Mossi Plateau in the west central part of the country over an area comprising about one-third of the arable land.

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[1] Society for International Development, Survey of International Development, Vol. VII, No. 6, June, 1971. See U.N. Report (Document E/4990, prepared by the Committee for Development Planning, 1971

The resulting population pressure on the land has prompted, according to World Bank estimates, some 250,000 or roughtly 20% of the male labor force, to migrate to neighboring countries for seasonal or long-term employment. It has been officially estimated in the Ivory Coast that there are about 500,000 Voltaics settled in the economically booming coastal region but unofficially Ivorian officials have estimated the total may be over 1,000,000.[2] This excludes migration estimates southward into Ghana and Togo.

Voltaics are in general extremely proud of their history. Mossi kingdoms began to be established during the 12th Century and reached their peak in the 15th and 16th centuries. Their internal organization, their political stability and their military superiority enabled them to resist subsequent invasions by warriors of Songhai, the Fulani and the Tuaregs.

Attached in 1904 to the French colony of Upper Senegal-Niger, Upper Volta became a separate colony in 1919, was divided between Mali, Niger and the Ivory Coast in 1932 and became autonomous again with basically its present frontiers in 1947. The Republic of Upper Volta was established as an independent nation on August 5, 1960. Major groups include the Mossi, with slightly less than half of the population, and of the remaining 160 subgroups, the Gourounsi, Bobos, Lobis, Mandi and Fulani number between 100,000 and 400,000 each. Most of the people follow traditional religious practices although Islam and Christianity have achieved a significant following.

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[2] Interviews held in Abidjan during November, 1979, by William Rideout.

The Yatenga region, which is the site of this study, is in the northwestern part of the country and its principal city of Ouahigouya is some 185 km. from the national capital of Ouagadougou. Historically Yatenga was established as a kingdom in the 16th Century by Naaba Yadega. Yatenga's political strength assured security, permitted significant population growth (it is presently the most densely populated region in Upper Volta with 51 inhabitants per square kilometer), and expansion to what are today the boundaries of the Northern Department and the Yatenga ORD (one of the eleven *Organismes Régionaux de Développement* - Regional Development Organizations - into which the country has been divided as a part of the national strategy for development). Yatenga lies in the Sudano-Sahelian region with an annual rainfall between 400-600 mm. unequally distributed through the area. Soils are poor and the vegetation stunted. The underground water level varies between 10 meters of depth in low lying areas to 60 meters in the north. Livestock suffer intermittently from drought since pasturage is meagre. It is not surprising, therefore, that a survey conducted in 1973 found that on the average 60% of the men in Yatenga between 15 and 34 years of age were absent.[/3] Demographic pressures, the caprices of climate and the poverty of the soil have reduced the chances of obtaining suitable returns from farming and livestock. Industry hardly exists and there is little handicraft work done. This situation tends to orient children who have received schooling, whether they have graduated or not, toward administrative employment.

The traditional kingdoms of Upper Volta were not only highly structured but, as their historical record indicates, they were also highly successful. Through the centuries these traditional patterns permitted the Voltaic to survive and to maintain their political independence and cultural identity in a harsh environment. Even though traditional political and social structures weakened and atrophied during the colonial period, they did, nevertheless, also continue to function although new, and in some cases parallel, colonial administrative structures and urban/modern social patterns began to evolve and challenge them. While political power in independent Upper Volta has been vested by the national constitution in a president, a council of ministers and a national assembly, and while it is one of five functioning democracies in all of Africa, the traditional kingdoms with their royal courts, ministers, vassals and pages continue to exist. At the

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/3 Convention d'études: Ministère du Travail et de la Fonction Publique - ORSTOM, Enquête sur les migrations de population à partir du pays mossi, 1972 - 1974.

village level the traditional administrative and social structures are significant and easily identifiable.

In brief, Yatenga, like most of Upper Volta and much of West Africa, is plagued by the same problem--too much water and too little water. The Sudano-Sahelian climate is characterized by violent rainfalls over a short period of time. This intense rainfall reduces the effective time rainwater is available and increases erosion and stream siltation. Extreme fluctuations in water availability, low soil fertility and detrimental diseases combined with rapid population growth pose acute problems to achieving the kind of accelerated development which becomes more critically imperative everyday./4

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Upper Volta has, in effect, two educational systems--a formal system in which the primary and secondary schools operate under the Ministry of Education and Culture while the university is under a newly created Ministry of Higher Education and Research and a separate system of rural education which was transferred to the Ministry of Rural Development in 1975. The formal primary system which follows a six year cycle consists of roughly 700 public and 60 private schools with some 160,000 pupils and 3,200 teachers

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/4 Agency for International Development, Development Assistance Program, FY 1975, Upper Volta and Niger. Washington, D.C.: Department of State, March, 1975, pp. D90-91.

for a student teacher ratio of about 50 to 1. The secondary system includes 23 public and 24 private schools, enrolls approximately 16,000 students and has about 650 teachers; an estimated 4,000 students are in technical education and vocational training courses (about 17% of secondary school enrollment). The secondary system is divided into a four year lower and a three year upper cycle. The university has some 90 faculty members and over 1,200 pupils. The entire formal system is structurally similar to formal educational systems found in most of Francophone West Africa.

Given their inaccessibility and non-functional curricula, formal schools invariably lead children away from the rural sector. The formal primary system, which admits children at age seven, enrolls only about 15% of those eligible in the age cohort group. Ten townships representing 7% of the total population contain about 60% of the enrollment. Where children are able to advance up the educational ladder, and only about 10% of primary school graduates enter public secondary schools, they are, year by year, promoted and as a result transferred to larger and larger population centers. Families must, therefore, help their children to move away from home even before they are teenagers so that the children can advance academically; they are, consequently, effectively uprooted from their homes, families and rural environments. After years away attending school, it becomes increasingly difficult for them to return to their original ways of life which have become alien. Lack of access to formal education has contributed substantially to the fact that only 37% of those enrolled in schools are girls and they are heavily concentrated at the lower grade levels.

The content of the formal school, taught in French from the first grade, bears little intended relationship to functional needs for rural living. If the formal system is not foreign, it is at least urban oriented and directed toward placing children in that milieu where, as noted previously, there is very little chance of employment.

In 1961, only one year after independence, the Government of Upper Volta, concerned about the economic and social dysfunctionalism of the formal schools, first established a separate system to serve the needs of rural youths between 15 and 18 years of age who had had no opportunity to attend primary school. The Rural Education Center (*Centre d'Education Rurale*-CER) system had an enrollment of 26,364 students, 10% of whom were females, by 1969/70 with a total of 435 hectares under cultivation--roughly 3 hectares per CER. The crops being raised included cotton, groundnuts, sorghum and rice. However, by 1972/73 enrollment had dropped to 24,164 from a previous high of 30,006 in 1971/72, and the government realized that the system had to be reformed since the program was not being implemented as designed and since CER's were increasingly being considered as inferior formal schools.

Therefore, in 1975 the government, with donor assistance, launched a reform to correct abuses of those CER components which would be retained and to give the system a more production-oriented emphasis. Responsibility was transferred to the Ministry of Rural Development which established a Rural Youth Training (FJA) Directorate. The FJA Directorate has an administrative and financial service through which foreign assistance to the project has been channeled, and a Rural Pedagogical Service to operate two instructor training centers (Centre de Formation des Maitres de l'Education Rural--CFMR) and to be responsible for research and evaluation.

The CER's have become the Centres de Formation des Jeunes Agriculteurs (CFJA's--Training Centers for Young Farmers) and while they also last for three years and enroll unschooled rural youths between 15 and 18 years of age, almost 50% of the curricula is now devoted to agriculture and related production activities while the remainder is concerned with functional literacy, numeracy appropriate to farming and studies related to the milieu. Unlike the formal primary schools, the local language is initially used and French is gradually introduced--unlike the former, in the CFJA if a student were to fail in French he or she would not automatically fail in all else.[5] While only 9% of the formal primary schools are located in the rural areas where 90% of the population are, the CFJA's are completely devoted to serving rural needs in rural areas. By late 1979 there were roughly 750 CFJA's with an instructional staff of 780 and a student enrollment of about 22,000.

An additional component of the reformed rural education system is a commitment by the FJA Directorate of the Ministry of Rural Development to provide support for the revival of traditional rural age-set groups into Groupements des Jeunes Agriculteurs (GJA--Young Farmers Groups). These groups could provide a link between the CFJA "school" experience and productive

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/5 Joseph Ki-Zerbo, "Education and Development", in J. Champion Ward (ed.), Education and Development Reconsidered: The Bellagio Conference Papers. New York: Praeger Publishers, Inc., 1974, p. 96.

adult life in the villages by helping to orient youth toward income-producing activities, work opportunities and continuing relevant education and training.

The FJA system is directly linked through village councils to local needs and development priorities. Likewise, GJA's must receive land allocations from village elders and support for their agricultural activities before they can function effectively.

For this expenditure on the formal education system, out of 1,000 who enter only 600 pass into the third grade and of those only 120 pass the entrance examination into the sixth grade. "In general, 20% of those who start primary school finish it and 12% of those who begin secondary school complete it successfully".[6] In addition to the costs incurred by wastage, one-fourth of all students have repeated grades. It is not difficult to understand why the national literacy rate remains below 10% and has shown little improvement over the past decade in spite of impressive educational efforts.

THE CULTURAL CONTEXT

Faced with massive development needs but constrained by very limited resources and convinced that self-help must be a major component for improving standards of living an analysis of traditional structures which had historically nourished and preserved Voltaic society in Yatenga appeared logical.

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[6] Ibid., pp. 103-107. Ki-Zerbo comments poignantly on the language problem in Upper Volta's formal schools.

Among those which continued to function at the village level and which were based on self-help, mutual cooperation, and volunteerism were some six structures deserving careful consideration: the Naam, the Sosoaga, the Sôngsôngtaaba (including the Songtaaba), the Garé, the Kin-Naam, and the Borôndo.

These structures held promise of permitting development without destruction by starting out with an understanding of who the peasant is, how he lives, what he knows, what he does and what he wants.

The Naam

The Naam, the traditional age-set structure among the Mossi, was the largest, most sophisticated and promising indigenous social organization which appeared to have the potential for serving as a conduit for ideas, information and practices which would assist the rural population to improve life. The age-set structure, which is not uncommon in Black Africa, has been described as:

> The division into classes and fraternities according to age which tends to structure the entire social body, including the world of young people, and endows each echelon with its own traditions. Its purpose is to promote among contemporaries and peers a spirit of equality and commitment, resulting from common training, and above all to manifest itself through mutual confidence and the obligation to assist each./7

and, again, as:

/7 P. Erny, L'Enfant et son milieu en Afrique Noire, essais sur l'éducation traditionelle. Paris: Payot, 1972, p. 85. The translation from French of this quote and all others is by the co-author, William Rideout.

> ...structures which draw together men of similar ages; they are almost always spinoff of initiation societies and each initiation cycle corresponds to a new graduation, a new class. The age classes play a considerable social role: they undertake works of public interest, provide training for young warriors, participate in collective agricultural works, provide access to political responsibilities.[8]

These general descriptions of age groups fit those functioning in Yatenga except that in Yatenga there are age-set groups for women as well as men. In general the structure that these associations are a miniature model of is the political structure of traditional Mossi society--once one understands the organizational structure of the _Naam_ and the functions of its officers and its _modus operandi_, one understands these phenomena for traditional Mossi society from the King's court down. It has traditionally been an incredibly functional and effective method of socialization.

Youths, 17 to 25 years of age for men and 13 to 20 for women, from the same village or clusters of quarters agree together to organize the _Naam_. The group receives permission from village elders and it then proceeds to elect _Naam_ officials according to traditional prescription: the village likewise prepares itself to deal with the _Naam_ and determines those in the adult population who will occupy traditional positions whose functions are to assist the _Naam_ and provide linkages between its structure and that of the village.

Socially the _Naams_ organize meetings, participate in festivals, learn about traditions, folklore and culture; occupationally and economically

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/8 J.C. Froenlich, _Animismes_. Paris: Ed. de l'Orante, 1964, p. 37.

members not only participate in regular work on the family plots but the Naam as a group receives an allocation of land from the Chief of the Land which they work together to obtain resources to undertake activities the Naam decides on and to make a contribution for improving the village. Broadly speaking, the men learn the adult male roles while the women learn the adult female roles. Male and female Naama work both together and separately but relationships between them are severely regulated by tradition and are highly circumspect.

Because a substantial amount of what Naams decide to do is determined by each of them in consultation with the village elders, Naams are adaptable to serve non-formal educational purposes and their substantial membership, usually 15 or more, insures the critical mass necessary to make a significant impression on village life. Given the traditional guidelines they must follow and their relationship with village elders, the traditional Naam association is not readily cooptable by any political force which does not fit the political will of the village.

The Sosoaga

The Sosoaga is a traditional practice which is used by peasants in order to obtain for just one day additional help in their fields. Thus the Sosoaga, unlike the Naam, exists without statutes, regulations and discipline and when a Sosoaga is announced, it is generally parents, friends and neighbours who respond to the call. The participants are not paid but they are customarily well fed during the specified day of work. It is an important means for soliciting help to accomplish heavy work difficult for one or two men to handle alone like clearing brush, weeding, plowing, harvesting or transporting goods a considerable distance.

The *Sosoaga*'s organizer, called the *Sosoaga-Saba*, attempts to have a prestigious friend in the village recruit the participants. Either by going from door to door or by using a town crier, the appeal is made. While women do not engage in the work *per se*, they do help prepare the food and drink and might also engage in activities such as plastering hut walls with new mud.

People respond to the *Sosoaga* summons basically for three reasons: (a) they do not wish to be considered unsociable; (b) they expect that there will be reciprocity and the individual helped this time will return the favor next time; and (c) participants want to help friends, relatives and parents. In all of these cases, and traditionally, the *Sosoaga* was cooperative and voluntary and its major importance today is largely in that it illustrates that voluntary cooperative participation has played an important role in rural society--the concept existed and was traditionally sanctioned. While this continues, it is also increasingly common for well-to-do peasants, chiefs, politicians and civil servants to organize a *Sosoaga* and to pay in cash for the labour provided.

The *Sôngsôngtaaba* and *Songtaaba*

Both the *Sôngsôngtaaba* and the *Songtaaba* are similar to the *Sosoaga* in terms of duration and purpose but they exist for different reasons. While both are done cooperatively and voluntarily, the *Songtaaba* is organized as a collective effort either for the common good, like clearing an area for a public meeting place, or providing a service for an individual in the community who is either sick or infirm.

The *Sôngsôngtaaba* is organized in order to establish predetermined mutual assistance relationships between individuals. Two or three families, often in the same socio-economic position, will arrange among themselves to manage their fields in common. This mutual assistance is especially important in order to accomplish heavy labor or to complete tasks more efficiently during periods of labor shortage (harvesting, weeding, etc.). Those joining together in a *Sôngsôngtaaba* generally work harder and more diligently and although the relationship is informal, comraderie develops not only between the men but between their wives and children as well so that *Sôngsôngtaaba* relationships become second only to those of the clan and the family. The relationship is not only tolerated and encouraged by the elders, but is acknowledged and respected by the community in general.

This special friendship, although originally based on economic need, gradually extends to most other aspects of life as well. Such inter-familial relationships, especially between different sexes, are treated much as they would be within a kinship context in order to prevent groups from deteriorating.

The *Garé*

The *Garé* is a practice which permits a peasant who is deprived (perhaps short of food prior to the harvest) or faced with an unexpected catastrophe (theft, fire, death of a parent, etc.) to ask a colleague who is better off than he for help "in bridging the gap". The peasant in need will provide one or several days of labor at weeding or plowing in exchange for what it is he needs. There is no salary involved; the *Garé* is a social mechanism for providing help to those temporarily in need.

The *Kin-Naam*

In Yatenga there are two types of female associations, in addition to the age-set *Naam* outlined above, one of which is the *Kin-Naam* for young girls and the other the *Borondo* for married women. The *Kin-Naam* is organized during the dry season uniquely to promote an environment in which the women get together in the afternoons or evenings to spin cotton. One or two days in advance of the session, the time and place are arranged so that all those who wish to participate can organize their schedules accordingly and each come with her own spinning equipment and cotton. The sessions normally last six to eight hours and as soon as the girls arrive the eldest determines when the *mugdiéé́* (which means mute) period begins at which point its rules are in force.

Kin-Naam members then observe the rule of silence (it is forbidden to speak or to laugh) and immobility (only the arms are permitted to move) until the leader declares the *mugdiéé́* ended and then there is singing, talking and laughing as well as moving about. Once the "break period" is over, the *mugdieéé* is again imposed and this procedure continues through the meeting. Those who disobey the rules of the *mugdiéé* are fined; traditionally these fines were paid in food or cowrie shells but today they are more often paid in currency. The fines collected are used to prepare food and drink for the feast (*Na-yisgu*) which ends the *Kin-Naam*. Reinforced by group pressure, severe self-control is achieved.

Community relations and interaction are, nevertheless, strongly promoted and the output from this shared *Kin-Naam* experience is quite remarkable. There is an effort not only to reinforce ties within the youngest existing age group, but also to establish strong bonds with members of the previous age group who are also asked to participate in the *Kin-Naam*. When a close friendship develops between a younger and an older *Kin-Naam* member the elder in a sense becomes a "social mother" of the younger and the elder is designated as the *Rôgh-mâ* (rogh meaning case and ma meaning mother) of the younger (*Kôgh-Biiga*--Biiga meaning child). The two confide in each other, exchange gifts, participate in rituals, and often work together in gardening, carrying water, milling grain, etc. The elder member supports and assists the younger with problems and activities the latter encounters in growing to full maturity --in understanding what is expected of her and how to behave. This relationship in which the elder teaches the younger practical, civic, and social behavior, in addition to helping her with personal problems, is not only an institutionalized social construct but also results in friendships which last for life. The *Kin-Naam* is, in fact, a further elaboration of the traditional age-set *Naam* for women and can be linked to its activities and purposes.

The *Borôndo*

Unlike the *Kin-Naam*, the *Borôndo* is not institutionalized but is informal. Women of the same age group, most of whom have been married for several years, live close to each other who have similar kinds of lives, problems and aspirations, support, protect and confide in each other. One sometimes recognizes members of the group by the nicknames which they give to each other. The relationships are complex and often secret but form a web of security and support for the *Borôndo* members.

Members use the *Borôndo* to promote social and economic activities which have some promise of contributing to the general well-being of all. There is an assurance that help is readily available to accomplish those tasks difficult or impossible to do alone and there is support during those critical, sad or joyous times in life.

The *Kin-Naam* and the *Borôndo* are both communitary and cooperative and provide opportunities for communion among members--for more enriching and fulfilling lives.

A number of Africans have been warning of the need to protect organizations such as the six reviewed above. As J. Ki-Zerbo noted:

> Human relations must remain sacred in our eyes, the hospitality and the solidarity which characterize our society must be protected and new ways must be found for expressing them and putting them into practice.[9]

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[9] J. Ki-Zerbo, quoted by B. Ouédraogo in "Le cas des Groupements Naam au Yatenga en Haute Volta", 1980, p. 26.

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

As already indicated, the Naam originated long ago as one of the traditional social patterns of rural life. Its purpose has been to guide the transition of village youths from adolescence to adulthood, and it has functioned as a miniature model of traditional Mossi society. As such the Naam has provided youths with an apprenticeship experience in the economic, social and cultural facts of life and during the Naam they demonstrate to their elders within the context of the traditional structure that they can work together as fully responsible citizens adhering to customary roles and practices.

To meet such a broad mandate, the Naam has been endowed with an impressive structure. The Chief of the Youths (Kombi-Naaba) is elected by his Naam peers, as are all other officials in the Naam, in an open democratic election. The Chief of the Youths is generally the most outstanding individual morally as well as physically in his age-set group and as the leader he must also possess tolerance and sensitivity toward the others. The spokesman for the Kombi-Naaba is in effect the vice-president (the Toogo-Naaba) and he also serves as the coordinator with the women's Naam and as the technical director of agricultural activities. The treasurer was traditionally called the Rasam-Naaba, and there were three positions (listed by rank: the Mogho-Naaba, the Tãnsoba and the Yako-Naaba) established which were designed to prepare Naam members to be warriors. Moral education has been the responsibility of the Maan m'yam-Naaba, while adjudicating charges of misbehavior has rested with the *Tilb-Naaba*. Verdicts pronounced against delinquents have been enforced by the *Basi-Naaba* and all boy-girl associations which result in any problems for the *Naams* have been handled by a *Rasamba-Naaba* for the boys and a *Pugsadb-Naaba* for the girls.

The structure which the girls have for their *Naam* is similar to that of boys with differences obviously occuring where activities differ because of sex role determinations. The male and female *Naams* work together or separately according to functions. These and other positions and roles indicate the sophistication of the *Naam* structure and there is every effort made to have each *Naam* member working in that position for which he or she is best suited.[10]

The *Naam* rejects discrimination or sectarianism while promoting cohesion among the youths first then between the youths and the elders. While the selection of *Naam* officials is democratic, the structure itself is hierarchical and regimented; even though it is based upon the consent of its members, it adheres to strict discipline and authority. Providing moral, technical and civic training with rigorous discipline freely agreed to by their "peer culture", one has the impression that the youths are pleased with this rigidity organized by, for and against themselves.[11]

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[10] Lédéa Bernard Ouédraogo, Le groupement pré-cooperatif du Yantenga (Haute Volta)", Dakar: BREDA/PLAN/POP/06/75, Mars, 1975. This article provides greater detail on the titles and duties of the extensive list of officials in the *Naam*.

[11] Ouédraogo, *op. cit.*, 1980, p. 16.

As conceptualized, the Naam could provide follow-up for the special rural education program designed to try to respond to the new social, economic and cultural demands which have become increasingly acute since independence. This educational system seeks to provide three years of schooling for children between the ages of 12 to 18 who have not had the chance to attend primary school. As stated by Article 2 of the decree establishing the rural education program:

> "Its purpose is to assure to all children who have not been in school elementary instruction and rural and civic training."/12

This has resulted in a curriculum designed to provide basic instruction in French, (although since 1975 the local language is the language of instruction and French is introduced gradually), math, civics, hygiene, history, geography and the fundamentals of climate and soil sciences but limited to the tools and financial resources available for their use. At least 50% of instruction is practical and oriented toward agricultural production which is immediately profitable. Programs for girls differ somewhat in that farming stresses gardening, livestock management focuses on smaller animals and poultry and there are special courses in home economics. Whereas the normal age of entry into primary school is 7, in the reformed rural education center the average age of entry is 15.

Completion of the 3 year FJA program coincides well with the traditional age at which youths organize their Naams. Having acquired the new skills and practices made available through the FJA, the former students could, during

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/12 Ibid., p. 5, quoted in French from the decree the following growing season, apply their agricultural skills within the context of their Naam organizations. While members of a Naam are identified for life as its constituents, the Naam functions as a separate and fully operational entity normally for four or five months--roughly the period of one complete growing season. In order to preserve and exploit this affiliation for the greater benefit of all, the idea has been promoted by Dr. Ouédraogo and his colleagues to assist the Naam to adapt subsequently into a pre-cooperative organization which would build upon and enhance the Naam experience. Until the reform of the rural primary school system in 1975, when the CER's became the CFJA's, the precooperative organizations were known as Groupements Post-Scolaire (GPS-Post School Groups) and as a revised and reformed entity they are now Groupements des Jeunes Agriculteurs (GJA-Rural Youth or Young Farmer Groups). Recognizing and appreciating the critical importance of linkages to the village elders, such as are found in the Naam-village relationship, the CFJA's and GJA's were constituted so as to integrate village councils into the supervision of their programs.

Approximately 25% of the financing for rural development programs has come from the central government and the remainder from foreign donors. These combined funds are made available to the 11 ORD's into which the country is divided and from the regional ORD centers financial and technical assistance are infused into the rural sector. In addition to development activities which are directed toward the entire country, each ORD also has one or two major donor sponsors for activities limited to that ORD. During the last

15 years, France and the World Bank have sponsored three, the largest number of ORD's, while the European Development Fund (FED) has supported two and the Canadian Development Agency one. The United States has co-sponsored two in conjunction with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). It should be noted that the Yatenga ORD, which is FED sponsored, was rated "very poor" in terms of its development potential by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and this was the lowest rating given to any ORD.[/13] Several of the Arab states have begun to assist Upper Volta in addition to the principal foreign donors (France, European Development Fund, Canada, Germany, the USA, the IBRD, and the UNDP) and assistance has been overwhelmingly in the form of grants. Each ORD sponsor also has its own management organization operating in the region(s) for which it has assumed special responsibility.

While French technical assistance was a major source of support for the initiation of the CER programs, the IBRD became actively involved in 1973 with a US$2.85 million credit for 3 of the ORD's designed to construct and equip 40 new centers (renamed CFJA's), equip 80 existing ones, organize, equip and service 150 post school groups for young farmers over 18 years of age, create three rural development training centers (Centre de Promotion Rurale - CPR), plus the provision of science laboratories for 21 secondary schools and technical assistance support to implement the project.[/14] The IBRD

/13 A.I.D., op. cit. p. D-32.

/14 IBRD Report, Appraisal of an Educational Project, Upper Volta, June 5, 1973, Report No. 102a-UV. Hereafter referred to as IBRD Report, 1973.

announced on October 25, 1979, that it was recommending a proposed credit to Upper Volta for a second education project for US$14.0 million which would be roughly matched by other contributions. The purpose of this project is to consolidate the achievements of the first education project and to assist the Government of Upper Volta to provide increased access to education for rural youths who had not received a primary education as well as provide teacher training facilities for instructors in the rural system. Training would also be provided for project managers, building construction supervisors and road and equipment maintenance personnel. The project seeks to increase enrollment in CFJA's by 7,000 and to establish GJA's for 15,000[/15]. However, the Bank fully recognizes that the CFJA's do not yet have the status of the formal school system and that the success of CFJA's rests upon the quality of their instruction, upon their ability to demonstrate their income-earning potential and upon the creation of career opportunities in agricultural extension. The Naam, what it was, is and might become, will be a powerful determinant of success in this national and international rural development undertaking.

THE NAAM AS A NONFORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAM IN OPERATION

The First Efforts to Recruit Naam Participation

As the CER program was expanding and students were completing their

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[/15] World Bank, "IDA Approves $14 Million Credit for Second Education Project in Upper Volta", IDA News Release No. 80/10. Washington, D.C.: October 25, 1979.

programs, it became apparent that one of the greatest problems these youths faced was actually getting started as producers in their own society. The CER itself was another foreign institution which had no place in traditional rural life and whose graduates, unlike those from formal schools, were not being diplomaed or certified to find employment in the modern urban sector but were expected to remain in the rural sector following traditional kinds of employment. In 1967, Bernard Lédéa Ouédraogo approached a *Naam* group in Bam, Kongoussi, which contained graduates from the Bam CER. In discussions with the Naam, he offered to help them increase their agricultural output and improve their standards of living. First, however, the *Naam* would have to demonstrate that it was serious and committed by planting, harvesting and effectively utilizing the earnings from a *Naam* field. As an ORD advisor, Ouédraogo and other technicians from the ORD could provide guidance to *Naam* members in support of, and perhaps in addition to, those learned in the CER on how to increase productivity without any significant capital investment. The *Naam* was visited from time to time to determine how the effort was progressing and appropriate members were provided with information and suggestions about their crops. After the *Naam* had met the challenge, the ORD would assist them with inputs needed for more effective and profitable cultivation the next year by providing them with credit, fertilizer, insecticide, advice, etc. However, this would be done as a loan not as a gift and the group gradually evolved into a self-sufficient enterprise requiring no additional ORD assistance. This process, repeated with few failures and many successes, holds tremendous promise for the future of rural development and as these groups evolved, Dr. Ouédraogo began to record evolutionary changes in the post Naam structure.

Modification of Characteristics and Roles from the Naam to Precooperative Group

The democratic pattern established by the Naam for electing its officials is followed without difficulty in the new GJA structure. The officers are selected not only for reasons which were traditionally relevant but also for how they behaved and were perceived by their comrades during the CFJA (formerly CER) training period. The evolution from Naam to precooperative association has proceeded with the general assent of the village elders and it has happened gradually and with careful deliberation so that there are no political or religious repercussions and no member suffers as a result.

The Kombi-Naaba must, in addition to leading and coordinating the Naam, now establish relations with the administrative and judicial authorities in the region. He continues to speak for the group and his responsibility grows as he begins to be called President. The second most powerful position, that of the Toogo-Naaba becomes increasingly involved in planning and memory no longer serves adequately for recording detailed arrangements and determining schedules--commitments are made beyond the village environment and written records must be kept. The Toogo-Naaba quite appropriately becomes the Secretary General. The Rasam-Naaba, the guardian of the treasury, becomes manager of three active accounts: small expenditures (petty cash), investments and bank accounts. He also deals with receipts, balancing accounts, loans, etc. If the existing Rasam-Naaba cannot handle the expanded accounting and financial management responsibilities he receives special training and assistance from the local extension agent or he is replaced by another who is capable of managing the increasingly complex demands of the position. The Naan m'yam-Naaba, responsible for moral education in the Naam, receives training from the Counsellor of Rural Education in the ORD and becomes an ORD Animateur. Since the training of warriors is no longer required, the Chief of War and his staff become involved in organizing team and other sporting activities and in theatrical and folkloric productions; these adaptations have worked well. The new management committee of the President, the Secretary Treasurer and the Chief Accountant are a continuation of the council of the Kombi-Naaba, the Toogo-Naaba and the Rasam-Naaba and there is no question about the new roles, their responsibilities and where they belong in village life.

The internal organization of the former Naam also changes through the need to establish new roles for which there is an obvious need but no previous Naam precedent. Materials acquired must be properly accounted for, stored and maintained. Tools, materials and loans made to different members must be recorded and accounted for; tools lost or damaged must be repaired or replaced by those who used them.

To support the new responsibilities of revised traditional positions and to specify those of new positions, each evolving precooperative group gradually elaborates, defines and adopts its own internal rules and statutes.

These laws of governance develop, grow and change through the discussions, debates and experiences of the members themselves; they are not predetermined and automatically distributed to all groups.

Expanding Functions and Activities

In addition to more intensive and improved agriculture being practiced during the wet seasons in conjunction with the expansion of roles and functions of group members described above, new activities are also being undertaken during the rest of the year. Obviously some of these are directly related to increasing agricultural productivity, but others are not.

During the winter GJA members work in the fields of their parents every day except Friday--the day left for the cultivation of their collective fields. This type of pattern follows the one set by the Naam, and in the same way parents often permit one or two additional days each week to be allocated to the group fields especially if it is obvious that the youths are serious and the results promising.

All collective fields are worked before seeding so as to break up the soil and efforts are made to maintain moisture so as to moderate the effects of the dry season. Plants are protected where possible, products are prepared for sale and transported to markets, and increasing attention is given to utilizing new techniques to protect the previous harvests in storage. There has been a tremendous expansion in efforts to control, trap and preserve water in order to make wet season agriculture more productive and in order to extend productivity well into the dry season through irrigation. The preparation of channels, culverts, reservoirs and dams is the kind of undertaking which requires substantial manpower, long-term commitment to maintenance and modifications, procedures for control and utilization of irrigated land and water and organizational structures in which the entire village participates and has confidence that the interests of all are being protected: these attributes exist in the Naam and in subsequent precooperative groups emanating from them.

As winter phases into the dry season there is continued attention given to gardening but the groups become increasingly involved in sports activities, in theatrical productions and in making cotton cloth, bricks and baskets. Greater attention is being given to attempting to exploit the urban non-agricultural market by promoting handicraft production for commercial purposes which is basically a new area of rural productivity and income.

Based on the literacy and numeracy obtained at the CFJA's, increasing numbers of rural youth are also subscribing to correspondence courses offered by the African Institute for Economic and Social Development (Institut Africain pour le Developpement Economique et Social - INADES) which is headquartered in Abidjan.

All of the activities of the groups are recorded in a series of notebooks which they are encouraged to maintain.

a) The Notebook of Practical Work contains rough sketches of the fields and the dates of all agriculturally related activities.

b) The Accounting Ledger records all financial transactions undertaken by the group.

c) A Shopping Notebook keeps track of all purchases and sales made at the group "mini-store" which stocks basic items of necessity for the members (soap, sugar, petroleum, salt, etc.).

d) A Notebook of Meetings for minutes of sessions held by the group alone as well as those which occasionally are held in conjunction with neighboring groups.

e) The Group Journal keeps a record of all visits made to the group by experts, political officials, ORD officials, the CFJA Counsellors, trainees, Animateurs and Encadreurs, and any other important visitors.

f) A Register of Materials on Loan is kept by the Stock Manager to record all borrowing, the borrower, the date returned and the condition in which items were returned. (As noted, items lost or damaged must be replaced, repaired or paid for.)

All of these records contribute to each group's self governance and to its internal rules and statutes.

The Structure of the GJA Movement

The general structure of local GJA's and the relationship this organizational model has to that of the traditional Naam was reviewed earlier. It was noted that while there were basic similarities, the GJA's were also free to modify their structures in order to serve their own unique environmental and human conditions better.

The local GJA's are federated at the level of the Sous-Prefecture or Arrondissement from which they elect a Council of Departmental Administration which establishes an office in the capital city of the Department. The Departmental offices in turn have established a confederation of GJA's, the Union of Federations of Rural Youth Groups (Union des Féderations des Groupements des Jeunes Agriculteurs -- UFGJA) which coordinates credit and commercialization operations of the 344 recognized GJA's in the nation. UFGJA activities and programs cover the entire Yatenga ORD. Under the Second Education Project from the IBRD 600 new GJA's are to be established which, projecting the average GJA membership at 25, would serve some 15,000 youths.

Advice and Services from Government and Other Agencies

Once a Naam or post-Naam group has demonstrated its commitment, has the support and recognition of village elders and has functioned effectively for at least one year, it is eligible to receive national and international support. As a first step, the local CFJA can make available to the GJA an initial gift from the center account of from CFAF 2,000 to 10,000 (approximately US$10 to US$50).

The GJA's receive advice and guidance from the instructor of the CFJA and from the animateur and/or animatrice employed by the government to sensitize and motivate the youths by visiting villages and making them aware (1) of what they can achieve by working together and (2) of the kinds of support available if they sincerely try to improve their productivity and their lives. From government ministries and ORD's, agricultural extension agents (*encadreurs*) visit the groups to assist them with the problems they face from purchasing seeds to harvesting, storage, marketing and management.

Since lack of capital limits possibilities for rapid rural development even when the rural population is mobilized and ready, as in the case of the *Naam*/GJA, additional sources of materials and equipment have been sought. The Government of Upper Volta has requested Non-Governmental Organizations (*Organisations non Gouvernementales*--ONG) to equip those groups which are most dynamic. This assistance has permitted (1) the recruitment and training of precooperative *animateurs* at CESAO (*Centre d'Etudes Economiques et Sociales de l'Afrique de l'Ouest*--Center of West African Economic and Social Studies) and INADES, (2) the provision of agricultural tools, and (3) the provision of kerosene lanterns for evening meetings and recreational activities. However, even though ONG donors considered those contributions as gifts, the UFGJA office asked receiving GJA's for repayment so that a rotating fund could be established to assist other poorer GJA's to obtain the same kind of equipment assistance. The system has worked.

From funds made available by foreign donors it is also possible for the GJA's through the ORD's to obtain loans from the National Development Bank (*Banque Nationale de Développement*--BND). With this money they can purchase wagons, draught animals, livestock, plows, poultry and small animals, fruit trees, etc. These loans become a group responsibility and in effect are a part of a BND rotating fund. The UFGJA as well as village elders emphasize and accentuate the obligation that the local GJA's have to honor their debts for their own futures as well as for those of their villages and other GJA's.

Under the proposed IBRD Second Education Project, GJA's would be eligible to obtain medium-term credit for agriculture in the amount of from US$300 to US$900. These loans would be for a period of 4-5 years at about 5.5% per annum. Administering these loans becomes the responsibility of the respective ORD's.

On October 10, 1976, the UFGJA announced its intention to promote the (1) creation of a cereals bank, (2) establishment of mills, and (3) improvement of organizations promoting agriculture. This is indicative of the trend to move to increasingly sophisticated and relevant rural development activities. It is also worth noting that 5 mills have thus far been established.

The Rural Education Reform and Its Impact on the Naam

It is intriguing that in seeking to reform education, in part by recognizing the potential contribution of Naam and then attempting to use it as a conduit for the introduction of new components from the CFJA (former CER's), ORD's, etc., to assist the rural population to improve their standards of living, a major result has been the strengthening of the traditional structure while at the same time using it to transmit new content and building new structures upon its foundations. While the Naam as a traditional institution had continued to be acknowledged and at least intermittently active, it was decreasingly effective as a means for assisting youths to make the transition from adolescence to adulthood in the increasingly depressed village environment. For many youths the real test, the more meaningful experience, occured in making the trip to the Ivory Coast or Ghana. In these more developed coastal areas one could find much greater chances of employment and thus money, attractive clothes, less physically demanding jobs, and new forms of entertainment (movies, theatres, "European" dances, etc.). One went to the coast as a boy and returned as an adult carrying with him the prestige of being one of the "bold ones" who had made the "trip". It was a test of maturity and it proved one was not "timid"--it verified his manhood when he came home with money, material goods and stories of great buildings, the endless blue ocean, etc. Adolescents who did not make the trip ran the risk of rejection by their comrades of the same age.

Assisting the revitalization of the Naam, however, has achieved three major purposes: (1) The Naam continues, as was traditionally intended, to serve as a mechanism for youths to prove themselves responsible enough and able enough to be productive civilized adults in their own environment. (2) When they have succeeded, as a productive age-set group, they can qualify for the kinds of assistance which will enable them to be employed and to have a chance not only of living a fulfilling life but of improving their life styles. (3) It also means the pre-Naam CFJA experience has immediate relevance and makes a direct contribution to what is accomplished subsequently in the Naam and then in the CJA. By using the traditional institution as the conduit, all actors know their roles, functions, responsibilities and accountabilities. New content is placed in a familiar container (new wine in old bottles), is infinitely more acceptable and innovative interventions are accomplished with incredibly enhanced speed and effectiveness. This in turn contributes to change through structural evolution but in the process the reinforced traditional structure adds authenticity to its new structural offsprings. And the problem of authenticité is one of the more critical ones facing contemporary Africa.

Rural Education and the Precooperative Movement

Working first with the Naam and then moving from this foundation to the precooperative GJA has succeeded although numerous other efforts to establish rural cooperatives in Upper Volta have failed. It is suggested that there are three major reasons for this: (1) Peasants fear risks. They distrust the abstract; it is far better to present them with the concrete. Changes in orientation are made only when it is felt necessary and they participate in the process--in planning as well as in implementation. The Naam is concrete and provides a basis for moving to the more abstract GJA; furthermore, rural Voltaics, losing their children to the coast and the cities and suffering a gross deterioration of their standards of living greatly aggravated by the drought, understand that changes in orientation are now necessary. (2) The evolutionary and cooperative character--from CFJA to Naam to GJA--helps to assure successful economic and social experiences which give each individual a psychological lift and a sense of power and fate control. Basically GJA chances are determined by village acceptance--by whether or not there is a positive supportive or negative environment. In this program village involvement in and commitment to the structures and activities have been extended from the Naam to the CFJA and the GJA. Not only is the village council involved in the governance of the local GJA's, but the GJA's have, in keeping with the Naam model, established special linkages to the village leadership by appointing generally two honorary presidents. Interestingly enough, those so appointed are usually retired veterans from the French military forces who have extensive knowledge of life beyond the village and Upper Volta, are fluent in French and have the respect and admiration of the villagers. These honorary presidents have been invaluable in supporting and promoting the GJA within the village intellectual and leadership circles. (3) The people of Upper Volta learn and live by imitation. Through the practical programs of this rural education/training program, the GJA learns, applies and provides a model to promote multiplier effects for the rest of the village.

According to a General Assembly of Groups meeting in Ouahigouya in 1969, the following five criteria were needed for a successful precooperative group movement: "(a) The group must have its 'act together' with a solid commitment by the members, group cohesion, and having among its members at least two honorary presidents; (b) It must be accepted by the village; this includes having cordial relations with the villagers (officials, parents, youths); (c) It must have available at least 4 hectares of land of acceptable quality; (d) It must have from 10 to 15 active members with an average age of at least 20; and (e) It should have lasted at least two years so that it can state with conviction the results it has achieved, the progress made in the cooperative training of its members (in terms of management, group living, etc.) and the faith of the members in the group."/16

/16 Ouédraogo, op. cit., 1977, pp. 298-99, contains the quote taken from the proces-verbal of the meeting.

It would appear from the growth of the GJA program in terms of numbers of associations and members enrolled, of money invested, of expanded organizational structure, and of increased rural production, that they have been successful in achieving these criteria. In analyzing the impending GJA portion of the Second Education Project, the World Bank noted that the GJA's have already demonstrated their ability to carry out production activities with reasonable success and they show impressive promise for the future.

The GJA faces a delicate problem, however, in that its existence and activities must not be limited to benefitting only the members--the village at large must also be enhanced by the GJA's efforts. This is a substantial part of the reason why the Naam practices and precedents provide such a powerful beneficial model which is further reinforced by the fact that the members themselves have just phased out of the Naam into the GJA.

However, there are some four areas of general concern about the GJA's. The first is that of achieving greater direct, as opposed to vicarious, participation by women. The Naam related structures such as the Kin-Naam and Borõndo would lend themselves well to assisting in this effort and so, in fact, could the Sõngsõngtaaba. Secondly, there has been a tendency on the part of GJA's to spend far too much money on annual festivals and this propensity is being directly addressed by Animateurs and ORD officials. Thirdly, is the need for greater and more concerted research on the evolving impact of the GJA's on rural life. The World Bank will be supporting this effort in conjunction with the Government of Upper Volta and the ORD's as a part of the Second Education Project and it will include studying the practical and commercial achievements of not only the GJA's but also their individual members. The government is also committing itself to preparing annual GJA evaluations. The final, and not the least serious point, relates to the tendency of the GJA's to restrict membership to those who have graduated from CFJA's and/or to those who are literate. The precooperative movement changed its designation from Post School Group (GPS) to GJA in part to overcome the prejudice against restricting participation to only those who had had some "schooling". Again, Voltaic leaders are seeking to overcome this new brand of "school prejudice" in the rural development program with, it appears, some success.

It is probably also fair to say that the GJA has not yet fully determined and/or exploited the linkages beyond the Naam with the other structured and unstructured voluntary and age-set related groups functioning in Voltaic society as reviewed in The Cultural Context. The potential to be derived from closer affiliation with these social components would appear to be impressive especially insofar as the women are concerned.

Nevertheless, there are already encouraging signs that the GJA movement is indeed succeeding in extremely significant ways. Dr. Ouédraogo has reported that the rural youth are no longer leaving their homes in significant numbers in areas where GJA programs are functioning. This rural human hemorrhage to the coastal states, as well as to the cities in Upper Volta, has abated. In some cases youths who had left home have subsequently decided to return since seeing the impact the GJA's have been making on life back in their home villages. Moreover, inquiries among village adults and leaders show overwhelming support for the GJA's and a conviction that they will succeed in providing employment and improving life for rural youth.[17]

Analysis of the GJA's Development

Assessing the status of the GJA's progress on the basis of Professor Henri Desroche's six criteria for judging cooperatives (grafting, volunteering cooperation, cooperative enterprise, cooperative democracy, cooperative commitment, and cooperative culture), indicates how impressive the precooperative's development has been.[18]

a. Grafting is readily apparent--first a Naam, a traditional association of youth, tolerated and supported by the administration, religious organizations, political parties, traditional chiefdoms becomes a hybrid combination of the two and finally the GJA precooperative association. The GJA structures itself so that it is in fact the GJA hypen village.

b. Volunteering cooperation: One enters the GJA through the channel of the Naam; there is equality and lack of discrimination in the GJA just as there was in the Naam--group members who had worked and played together in the Naam continue to do so in the GJA. In addition, the cooperative relationship which existed between the Naam and the village is substantially and intentionally replicated by the GJA. Associations have established close

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/17 Ouédraogo, Ibid.

/18 H. Desroche, Le développement intercoopératif, ses modèles et ses combinaisons. Sherbrooke (Quebec): Librairie de la Cité Universitaire, 1969, p. 12

relationships with each other and the system has established a national democratic confederation of GJA's. All of this has been done voluntarily and the traditional volunteerism which has always existed is beginning to be mobilized and applied in the GJA content.

c. Cooperative Enterprise: The group members cultivate collective fields and share in human and material investments. They operate a small store for members, often a common kitchen supplied by food from a common garden, raise livestock and poultry together, and buy, sell and manage agricultural and handicraft equipment--all of this done democratically in open forums and resulting in collective ownership, collective management and collective distribution and division of outputs.

d. Cooperative Democracy: Decisions are made on the basis of one vote per member and there is a tradition carried on from the Naam of ascertaining that organization officials come from minority strata as well. Therefore, there is a strong integrative factor working in conjunction with democracy. There is also a deliberate effort to try to make certain that each member has tasks and responsibilities which fit his character, his comportment and his competence. The well-being of the individual is not to be sacrificed or compromised on the grounds that it conflicts with what is good for the organization.

e. Cooperative Conviction: Surveys conducted over the past three years indicate that there is strong commitment to the GJA effort expressed by members, parents, village leaders and youths. First of all this has been reinforced by their conviction that community life has been improved by the

GFA because (1) the majority of youths are no longer emigrating, (2) the rapport between youths and elders, previously often near open confrontation, has evolved to one of mutual assistance and solid understanding, and (3) social activities, including assistance to the village and to needy villagers, create the type of ambiance which enriches life. Second, the GJA's economic successes have in fact fired their self confidence and they are now convinced that they can undertake water control, diversion and storage projects; establish grain mills; take out loans and buy equipment and farm supplies to increase production--all of which they never before believed could have been done. They have developed confidence in themselves as a group and as individuals.

f. Cooperative Culture: In the cooperative environment there is a balance between the individual and the group--there is concern for equality and "taking turns" in almost all tasks. The relationships promote motivation and mobilization of the group's members--there is a conscientización occuring --development of new roles, rights and relationships builds upon the old and further enriches life. Learning is strongly promoted and the dry season becomes a dynamic period for workshops, correspondence courses, radio education programs, and practical training rather than the more traditional "dead period". Most of all, there is an effort and a desire to share new knowledge and skills with comrades.

In summary, based on the six cooperative criteria suggested above, the comparative analysis of the GPA's progress as a precooperative organization is both significant and promising.

LESSONS FOR TRANSFER

Perhaps the single most important lesson to be derived from this study of the Naam age-set group in Upper Volta is the need to make certain that indigenous social structures are thoroughly understood so that the basis for making developmental analyses are fully appreciated, relevant and accurate in terms of their broader ramifications--there would be danger in only focusing on the Naam without knowing in turn the impact which the age-set structure has on peoples' lives and how it relates to other social structures. The Naam was the critical structure - others would not have had the same pervasive social impact.

This study has also indicated that reinforcement of a traditional structure has, in fact, promoted development rather than inhibited it. In far too many instances those interested in development have almost automatically taken the position that indigenous structures were the first barrier to overcome and that ipso facto they had to be ignored or destroyed. In fact, the Naam has served as a channel through which to mobilize rural people and resources and then not only as a means to introduce new training and instruction but also a base on which to build follow-up structures.

Rural development programs which could have taken much longer to implement were activated a great deal faster because an existing social structure was utilized--people did not have to deal with both a new institution and new content--they only had to be concerned with the latter. The time saved, the levels of participation and the degree of program goal achievement have been extremely impressive.

People when using an indigenous structure understand the roles and responsibilities of all actors. The more integrated a society is, the more difficult it is for that society to handle new inputs.[19] Using an indigenous structure helps prevent the intervention from being, perhaps indefinitely, "foreign".

It should also be noted that the special rural education system began to function much more effectively once it was moved out of the Ministry of Education and into the Ministry of Rural Development. The educational system, elitist and French oriented, could not effectively integrate a special basic practical and rural development oriented component. Within the educational system, a rural education system would always be a step-child and would always be second class. The system could not flourish in that environment and as long as the bulk of the education was in French, the system would be substantially divorced from the indigenous environment within which it was functioning.

There is obvious, but often overlooked, need for the training school or component to be concerned with ultimate employment. It would appear that both the CER and CFJA efforts would have ultimately failed without the

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/19 George Kneller, Educational Anthropology. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1965.

development of the follow-up GPS and GJA systems which in Upper Volta could be phased in through the *Maam*.

The phase-in of the GPS/GJA systems was made possible through research and analysis by dedicated and competent Voltaics as well as a few foreigners who helped save this major rural development effort. This type of formative research is critical, as is continuous research to follow the evolving impact of these new structures on rural life and culture as well as on development.

Utilization of a known indigenous structure has also meant that there was a strongly affective relationship between the people and the mechanism for intervention into their lives. This affective rapport between people and institution is, it is suggested, critical.[20]

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[20] William M. Rideout, Jr., "Rural Education in Upper Volta: A Model Utilizing an Indigenous Social Institution", presented to the Comparative International Education Society meeting at Ann Arbor, Michigan, March, 1978.

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NOTES ON THE PESANTREN IN RURAL JAVA: AN ISLAMIC INSTITUTION PROMOTING NON-FORMAL COMMUNITY EDUCATION

by

Umar Kayam

THE INDONESIAN/ISLAMIC SETTING

Ninety-five percent of the population of Indonesia (145 million) formally profess the Islamic religion. On the basis of sheer numbers, Indonesia is one of the most populous Moslem countries in the world. However, Islam is a relatively recent phenomenon, having penetrated Indonesia not earlier than the 13th century, long after the hegira of Mohamed in the year A.D. 622 and the peak of the Islamic Empire in the 9th century.

The penetration was apparently through several trading incursions covering a period of several centuries before, in the 16th century, Islamic kingdoms began to take root in Indonesia. Gujarati, Chinese and Arab traders were the new religion's carriers to the Indonesian archipelago. Its acceptance, however, was made possible because of socio-economic and political crises in strategic trade kingdoms whose rulers were looking for ways of breaking out of vassalage to the powerful Hindu Javanese kingdom of Majapahit. Islam provided the ally they needed to assert their long-awaited independence. In Islam they found an opportunity to make a political as well as cultural breakthrough, thus establishing a new political and cultural order and breaking away from the old, established Hindu Javanese order.

The result of Islam's penetration was, however, far from homogeneous integration. The archipelago's diversified cultures and histories produced widely varying responses to the arrival of Islam. In the coastal areas, which have always been politically and culturally more "cosmopolitan" than the hinterlands, there was relatively little resistance. In the hinterlands (of Central and East Java) where Buddhism and Hinduism had achieved a cultural synthesis and equilibrium over many centuries, there was a much stronger cultural barrier and it took much longer to adjust to the new religion. This adjustment and accommodation between Islam and the Javanese cultural traditions was not yet fully developed before the Dutch arrived in the 18th century. Thus in comparison with the relatively long stretch from the 7th century Buddhistic Sriwijaya to the 15th century Hindu-Javanese Majapahit, Islam has had a relatively short period for shaping a cultural format.

Clifford Geertz's celebrated study on Islam in Java (*The Religion of Java*) distinguishes three categories of Islamic observation - the *santri*, the *abangan* and the *priyayi*.

The *santri* is the strictly devoted Muslim who prays five times a day and observes all regulations obediently. The *abangan* is the ritual-oriented animist who adopts certain Islamic practices such as reciting parts of the Koran in his rituals. The *priyayi* adopts a pantheistic all-embracing mysticism, an Islamic variant espoused by Javanese middle-class and bureaucrats. These categories reflect the varying forms of accommodation between Islam and the earlier Javanese cultural traditions (i.e. Buddhism and Hinduism). The majority of Muslims in Indonesia belong to the Sunni tradition and are orientated to the Shafi'ite law school. The Sunni adhere to the tradition of the Prophet and regard the Koran, the Hadits (notes and codification of the Prophet's sayings), the Qiyas (analogy) and the Ijma' (consensus of the Ulemas) as the main source of teaching about Islam. The Sunni are quite orthodox, having adopted Asy'ari's theological system of the 9th century. Within the Sunni tradition in Indonesia a number of local schisms have developed; two of the most important are the Nahdathul Ulama and the Muhamadiah.

The Nahdathul Ulama (the Rise of the Ulamas) was founded in 1926 in Jombang, East Java, by Hasyim As'ari. Its purpose was to reform religious practices; the vehicle for this was to be changes to the Islamic school (pesantren). Hasyim As'ari started by making changes to his own pesantren in Jombang. He introduced classes and had the santris instructed in separate class-rooms. Before this innovation the santris had been individually tutored by the kyahi (religious teacher) or his assistants. The purpose of the reform was to strengthen the education system in the pesantren and make the pesantren a more effective and efficient vehicle in educating the youth in the complete knowledge of Islam.

The "curriculum", however, remained the same, concentrating on the Koran, the Hadits, the Qiyas and the Ijma'. For the Nahdathul Ulama these sources of knowledge are a major distinguishing feature of their sect. They believe that true followers of the Prophet (ahlussunah wal-jama'ah) are those who adhere to these four sources of Islamic knowledge. While adopting this orthodox approach to Islamic teaching, they are flexible enough to admit various cultural practices inherited from the earlier Hindu-Javanese traditions.

The Nahdathul Ulama has vast support among the rural *kyahis* and *santris* - their major source of support in Indonesia. When the Nahdathul Ulama also operated as a political party in the 50's and during the Sukarno era, its adherence to orthodoxy and flexibility to rural cultures were politically profitable assets. The Nahdathul Ulama emerged as one of the big four victorious parties in the 1955 general election, and Sukarno (who was in constant confrontation with the modernist Islam political party, the Masyumi) found in Nahdathul Ulama an ideal vehicle for his political strategies. Now, after the Suharto regime has re-structured the Islamic political parties into one political party, Nahdathul Ulama remains powerful and influential in the new political body.

The Muhamadiah was founded in 1912 in Yogyakarta, Central Java, by Ahmad Dahlan to stimulate religious education and to promote the religious life of its members. Although involved in various forms of social development such as the founding of medical clinics, orphanage houses, a poor-house, and schools of various levels, it is primarily a reform movement within Islam, adopting the teachings of an Egyptian reformer of the 19th century, Muhammad Abduh. Abduh called for a return to the Koran and the Hadits and a purification of all teachings on Islam based on secondary sources. The Muhamadiah interpreted this in an Indonesian context as a call for rooting out the Hindu-Javanese (i.e. non-Islamic) practices incorporated into Islamic religious life. It is not coincidental that Ahmad Dahlan chose Yogyakarta as the launching site of the reform movement. Yogyakarta is one of the two most important Javanese "cradles of culture" where the earlier Hindu-Javanese traditions are still a vital part of the local culture. By launching the reform movement in Yogyakarta Dahlan and his associates demonstrated their resolve to purify Islam from *bid'ah* (something that is newly added as religious rule originated from uncertain sources) and *Khurafat* (superstition) practices. The Muhamadiah accept the Koran and Hadits as the principle sources of knowledge on Islam and pay less attention to the *Qiyas* and the *Ijma'*. They also stress the importance of the *Ijtihad* (the serious search for religious truth, especially through studies of Islam sources).

Both the Nahdathul Ulama and the Muhamadiah are viewed as reform movements. The former is more concerned with changing the educational system so that it is more effective in building an identity among the followers of the Prophet (*ahlussanah waljamaah*); the latter is more interested in changing the content of the teaching, removing the Hindu-Javanese practices and maintaining only Islamic sources. The former is criticized by the Muhamadiah as too lenient in accepting the Hindu-Javanese practices of *bid'ah* and *khurufat*; the latter is viewed by the Nahdathul Ulama as outside the *ahlussanah waljamaah* because of their flexibility in treating the *Qiyas* and the *Ijma'* and their stress on the *Ijtihad*.

THE GENERAL EDUCATION SETTING

Toward the end of the 19th century, the Dutch colonial administration launched a vast public education system. The system was an aspect of the *Ethical Policy*, a policy launched by liberals and social-democrats in the Netherlands who called for greater autonomy for the Dutch expatriates in the colony (in particular the mercantile capitalists) and improvements for the

Indonesian people through irrigation, health programmes in the rural areas, migration of people from overpopulated rural areas and more public education. Public education was to be one ingredient for building a prosperous and profitable economy. However, as in other colonies, it was rigidly stratified.

In the rural areas there was a three-year "volkschool" for the lower class and a five-year school for the landlord class. In the urban areas there was a five-year school for the working class, a seven-year school for middle-class bureaucrats and aristocrats, and the Dutch elementary school for a few members of the Indonesian aristocracy. In addition there were vocational schools for the training of elementary-school teachers, agricultural extension workers, health officers and other bureaucrats.

This stratified educational system was clearly meant to serve the needs of the colonial economy, reinforcing the existing class structure and providing the middle and lower-level bureaucrats needed for the colonial administration.

But what about the rural Muslims? They had their pesantren. Muslim peasants would send their children to the pesantren to learn to write and speak Arabic and to recite the Koran. A few children continued on under the personal tutoring of the _kyahi_ to make a detailed study of the teachings of Islam.

When the Dutch introduced public education including the teaching of "secular knowledge" and Latin and Roman characters, the majority of the Muslim peasants reacted negatively. To them the new system was a waste of time and money since it would alienate their children from the traditional peasant environment. The _kyahi_ and other orthodox rural Muslim leaders viewed this intervention by the Dutch - Christians and "infidels" - as a means of undermining faith in Islam in the rural areas. Their resistance strengthened the pesantren not only as Islamic educational institutions but also as bastions of the faith.

Changes, however, took place. The Dutch did not make public education compulsory but they did actively promote it through the village administration. Parents were persuaded to send their children to public-schools, in addition to sending them to the pesantren. They were told that modern education would improve their chances for upward social mobility in the cities as the priyayi (aristocrats) in the bureaucracy.

As the colonial economic structures took root, more and more peasants became landless and unemployed and were forced to seek employment in the cities. Education in village public schools, no matter how minimal, was seen as a valuable economic asset for surviving in the cities. Nonetheless, it did reinforce the existing class structure. After the War of Liberation when new infra-structures had to be built and democratization in all fields had to be implemented as a consequence of becoming an independent nation with democratic principles, the rural areas decidedly lost the status (to use Redfield's expression) of "little communities", the compact small "ecological system". Relationships and cultural contact between town and village became much more dynamic, with many villagers regularly commuting between the village and town.

It is within this context that the tradition-bound pesantren is now being challenged to become a source of non-formal education for rural development. But what actually is a pesantren?

THE PESANTREN

A typical pesantren is located in the middle of a village or hamlet situated among villagers' housing. Often there is very little to distinguish it from other houses in the village. The pesantren (literally meaning the place of the santri, the pupil) is a cluster of houses usually surrounding a mosque. It consists of dormitories of the santris and houses of the kyahi (the head religious teacher and spiritual leader of the pesantren), his ustadz (a teacher and deputy to the kyahi) and his badal (teaching assistant).

In the traditional pesantren where there are no classrooms the instruction which is usually given through personal tutoring by the kyahi or the ustadz is done in the kyahi's veranda, sometimes at the mosque, sometimes under the trees in the pesantren garden, in short at places where the kyahi sees fit. The dormitories are usually very simple small houses constructed of bamboo and wood following the traditional village architecture. The house of the kyahi is usually slightly more fancy although it remains simple and is constructed from bamboo and wood and again is styled after the traditional village architecture.

In some cases the pesantren is started by an initiative of a kyahi who has inherited land or houses from his family; he owns the pesantren and designs its lay-out. In other cases, a pesantren is started through a collective gift from the community and the community decides on the plan of the complex. In other situations a rich benefactor donates some buildings; this was the case in the Pabelan pesantren in central Java for which a set of modern concrete buildings were recently built by a rich benefactor. This pesantren recently won the Aga Khan Award for Architecture - for its conscious effort in keeping the complex a comfortable habitat without being extravagant or luxurious. It has managed to keep the image of rural housing. Nevertheless, Pabelan could not reject a "modern building" that was donated by a rich benefactor and now is the ugly corner of the beautiful but simple complex. New or modern pesantren have classrooms since they have adopted the class-instruction method.

It has been mentioned that in some cases the kyahi owns and manages the whole complex of the pesantren. He decides what kind of instruction should be given and how the pesantren should be managed. But in many cases a pesantren, usually after a successful development, requires more than a single person to manage its operation. Usually a board of elders is selected from the village community to oversee its policies and operations. The complexity of the organization depends on the size of the pesantren and the approach of the founding-father and the board. The case of the Pabelan pesantren could serve as an illustration. Kyahi Hammam Dja'far who is the founder - or at least the revitalizer of the long defunct Pabelan pesantren - is understandably the accepted leader of Pabelan. But in order to keep close rapport between his pesantren and the Pabelan community the kyahi has set up two kinds of boards to check him and the pesantren. The first board is the "board of trustees" consisting of both formal and informal village leaders; this board controls the kyahi's policies toward the pesantren. The second board is the community board "safeguarding the Islamic spirit of the community". It consists of the community religious leaders and teachers (ustads) of the pesantren; it discusses how the pesantren can assist rural government in promoting religious life in the community. The two boards have helped to strengthen the ties of the community to the pesantren.

The kind of instruction or "curriculum" that is given to a pesantren depends on the basic outlook of the kyahi or of the kyahi and the community. In traditional pesantren where the kyahi sees a pesantren as a place to prepare devoted orthodox Islamic leaders the "curriculum" covers all aspects of Islamic studies: for example, qiraat (the art of Koran reading), tauhid (the conviction of God's oneness), fiqh (law), hadits (the codified sayings of the Prophet), tarikh (history of the Prophet and of Islam), tafsir (interpretation of the Koran), akhlaq (ethics), nahwu (grammar). In some cases, depending on the "specialty" of the kyahi, courses such as astronomy and mysticism are given. The method of teaching is sorogan (personal tutoring or even drilling) and balagan (listening to the kyahi's oratory). The length of study of a santri in a traditional pesantren is almost entirely at the whim of the kyahi. If a kyahi considers that a particular santri would be only gifted in mastering the readings of the Koran and additional courses such as the hadits, the Arabic language and some aspects of the fiqh, he could terminate the santri's study after a few years stay in a pesantren. But if the kyahi recognizes a special gift or talent in a santri then the kyahi could withold the santri for several years more. And if the santri shows even more talent for a specific subject, the kyahi would sometimes send the gifted santri to another pesantren which specializes in this subject area. Usually a santri of this kind becomes an assistant or deputy or eventually starts his own pesantren.

In new pesantrens the curriculum includes "secular courses". The Pabelan pesantren for example only admits santri who have finished elementary school in order to be able to follow the "secular courses" offered at secondary school level. The Pabelan pesantren, unlike the traditional pesantren which never has a fixed length of study, offers a six-year programme of study. The first three years are equivalent to a junior high school plus Islamic studies. The second three years are equivalent to senior high school plus advanced Islamic studies. The "secular courses" concentrate on general knowledge and courses needed for teachers. This is due to kyahi Hamman Dja'far's conviction that a santri who has graduated from Pabelan should be well-equipped and ready to be a teacher and educator in the community. Apparently the kyahi is convinced that to be an effective community leader a santri must know how to "teach" the community. And since the community is a rural community in a changing society, the Pabelan pesantren also gives practical courses such as agriculture, cooperative management, elementary techniques in electronics, community organization.

Another pesantren in the Bogor area in West Java, the Darul Falah, concentrates on agriculture. Its objective is to educate santri who will become devoted, Islamic community leaders with expertise in agriculture. The curriculum is a mixture of agricultural study and the standard courses in Islamic studies. The kyahi of this pesantren has unusual training for this post, having graduated from Bogor's Institute of Agriculture.

Modern pesantren such as Pabelan and Darul Falah work closely with various agencies. Pabelan works closely with LP3ES (a leading research and training institute in economics and youth organization) and the regional agricultural extension office and consults regularly with Gadjah Mada University. Darul Falah has a close relationship with the Institute of Agriculture in Bogor.

An interesting difference in outlook between the traditional pesantren and the new ones are the way they look at the Arabic language and the modern languages. In both kinds of pesantren Arabic is treated as an important language and the santris are expected to master it. But while at the traditional pesantren Arabic is only seen as the language of the Koran, the Hadits, and the mediaeval textbooks, the newer pesantren see Arabic also as a contemporary living language. Secondly, in the newer pesantren English is considered as another important language and the santris are expected to master it. In Pabelan and Gontor, for example it is compulsory during school hours that santris use either Arabic or English as their means of communication. In traditional pesantrens, on the other hand, Javanese is the language of instruction. This is the traditional language in which the old and leading pesantrens in East Java have been run; many of the kyahis in younger pesantren in other parts of Java and Sumatra were trained in East Java. The modern pesantren uses Indonesian rather than Javanese as the medium of instruction. In Pabelan, for instance, they have regular oral exercises in English, Arabic and Indonesian; the three languages are treated as living languages, the languages of contemporary people.

A pesantren is a busy place and has long hours. It starts at 4 a.m. with the subuh community-prayer and ends at 9 p.m. with the isya community-prayer. In between they conduct their studies interspersed with the dhuhur, ashar, and maghrib prayers.

CONCLUSION

There are now about 15,000 pesantren with a total student population of about five million santris scattered throughout Java and parts of Sumatra. According to Kyahi Hammam Dja'far about 15% are "modern" pesantren, operating independently from direct patronage or doctrinal influence of a particular schism especially the Nahdathul Ulama. What is remarkable about the development of the pesantren is that even the most modern is community-supported. Their income is dependent on contributions from the community, alumni and occasional benefactors from outside; the santri are allowed to decide on their contribution to the pesantren (in Pabelan the agreed contribution is Rp. 6,500 a month including board and lodging); and the pesantren is closely linked with the community and oriented to its needs and circumstances.

To pesantrens like Pabelan and Darul Falah the community's condition is not accepted as a static rural reality. It is viewed as a rapidly changing situation and the pesantrens' curriculum takes this into account. Both see themselves as preparing Muslim community leaders who can understand not only the local reality but the broader changes and implications for the whole society.

In the face of these rapid changes in Indonesian society, the pesantren leaders are aware of the importance of retaining certain traditional aspects of the pesantren - the spiritual values, identity and self-confidence and loyalty to the environment which ultimately lead to the goal of becoming muslim (he who submits), mukmin (he who is devoted but knows life), and muchsin (he who is devoted but knows of his environment). The pesantren provides a vital source of identity and continuity in a situation of heavy rural-urban migration and increasing government control over rural life.

In spite of these "modernizing" pressures many pesantren graduates have eschewed jobs in the government bureaucracy, preferring to become community leaders and teachers in small towns and villages. At the same time many urban parents of the "priyayi" class are beginning to send their children to pesantren.

The current trend among the pesantren, as indicated by the modern ones like Gontor, Pabelan and Darul Falah, is towards a less non-formal approach. However, if the pesantren are able to continue to recruit leadership like those of the Pabelan and Darul Falah pesantren then the modern pesantren will be able to maintain their traditional spirit within a rural context while becoming modern.

The danger might be if orthodox elements fail to inspire new orientations. Then the pesantren might fall into the same problem as that of Javanese agriculture which Geertz described as having become "involuted" (i.e. reaching a high level of technical development but constrained by severe socio-economic problems).

If government, society and time (three elements that do not necessarily cooperate) are kind enough to pesantren like Pabelan and leaders like Hammam Dja'far, the pesantren might become a challenging model for rural education in a Muslim community.

OODI WEAVERS:
MATERIAL CULTURE, WORKERS ORGANIZATION AND NONFORMAL EDUCATION IN BOTSWANA [1]

by

Martin L. Byram

> "Imagine Lentswe la Oodi Weavers to be a tapestry. Without being pretentious, the factory would be a complex weave of both obvious and subtle meaning, of vivid local colour and didactic detail.
>
> The factory tapestry, in many ways, is a unique industrial experiment. It provides training and employment to about fifty people, so that they may have a greater share in the economic growth of their country. These people keep the factory economically viable through the manufacture of high quality woven goods on a self-sustaining basis. But below the surface of the weave, the factory attempts much more. It strives for basic development goals for the individual and within the community. The factory project attempts to educate towards these broader development goals, plus liberate people from the constraint of poverty and ignorance." (D. Lewycky, 1977 piii).

THE BOTSWANA HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Botswana became independent some fourteen years ago, in 1966. Since then there have been many changes. Not least has been the transition from a traditional, tribal leadership system to a 'modern' system of government. A democratic system has been introduced that reaches all levels of Botswana

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1. The author would like to acknowledge his indebtedness to: Peder Gowenius for his openness to questions and his willingness to share his experience; Dennis Lewycky for his excellent report Tapestry: Report on Oodi Weavers from which this account was largely drawn, and; Ross Kidd for his editorial help and for his work on the educational section.

society: from the Presidential level, through the elected National Assembly and District Councils, down to the Village Development Committees. However, important remnants of the traditional tribal structure still remain. The major tribes are represented in the House of Chiefs, and each village has an officially recognized headman. The Kgotla, the village meeting place, still dominates the social and political life of Botswana village society. Whilst it is argued that people no longer attend Kgotla meetings in the numbers they used to, it is still a major focal point of activity in a village and major issues affecting village life are discussed at the Kgotla. In a sense it is the meeting point of both the traditional and the modern systems of government. It is used by both the modern and traditional leaders as a forum for consulting people on new ideas and policies and getting local decisions agreed upon.

The village headman presides at the Kgotla. Oficially his authority is now mainly concerned with exercising judicial duties. However, in many villages the headman is still sufficiently important that he is kept informed of all new developments and proposed activities for his village. Even though in most cases they no longer have the power to organize people to participate in village development projects, they are still sufficiently respected that unless a project has the endorsement of the headman and other village elders it will not receive the support of the people.

On the whole, though, the introduction of the modern system of government has led to the erosion of traditional authority and in turn to weakening of communal activities and social cohesiveness within the villages. In the past many activities in the village such as ploughing, harvesting, housebuilding, were carried out on a communal basis (known as letsema). Age-regiments (mephato) - groups of young men of the same age - took on construction and other projects for the village. Now there is very little left of communal activity or collective work undertaken by age-regiments. In addition, the headman's declining authority makes it difficult to compel people to participate in village development projects.

In place of tribal compulsion, government has introduced the ideology of "self-reliance" or "self-help". This has been explained as the need for local participation in development projects (eg., the building of schools, public latrines, etc.) in order to supplement government efforts. Many villages, through their Village Development Committees, have successfully undertaken self-help construction projects, such as building school classrooms and teachers' quarters. However, in general self-help projects have tended to suffer from a lack of enthusiasm and support from the majority of villagers. At the same time other factors and forces have discouraged self-help efforts. The individualism of the Batswana - encouraged by the decline of the traditional leadership, the provision of basic services by government and their increased exposure to the capitalistic economic system of South Africa (and now Botswana) - works against self-help activities in the villages. The proximity of South Africa has also helped to introduce into Botswana a perception of development that is strongly related to western standards - standards that are not always appropriate to the country's current situation and which are further imposed by the large number of expatriates working in the country. This has resulted in the rejection of many self-help projects on the grounds that they are of an inferior quality. For example, in some cases functional buildings constructed through village self-help efforts have been measured against western building standards and criticised for being of an 'inferior' quality. Similarly strict licensing and health regulations, modeled on western experience, tend to discourage the small street vendor-type entrepreneur from setting up business. These regulations are fine for controlling the business of the densely populated towns but do little to encourage economic development in the rural areas.

Along with "self-reliance" Botswana is also committed to "rapid economic and social development and promoting social justice". (National Development Plan 1973-1978). For rural development this has been expressed in terms of increasing the productivity of the land and the wildlife; improving marketing and credit facilities; and increasing employment opportunities. Much of the economic growth that has taken place can be credited to the cattle and mining industries. There are approximately 3 million head of cattle in the country, and beef is a major export. Botswana is also rich in various mineral resources. Coal, copper-nickel and diamonds are mined and exported.

While government has succeeded in generating fairly rapid economic development, so far it has been less successful in sharing the benefits of this new wealth. Gross inequities in income remain largely related to the inequitable distribution of cattle. 5% of rural households own over 50% of the cattle, whilst 45% of households own no cattle. Those without cattle are dependent on subsistence agriculture, on wages as cattle-workers, or as migrant labourers (to South Africa).

Work in the mines and industries of South Africa has for a long time been one of the established life-lines for poor families. Almost one third of the male labour force is absent from Botswana at any one time. Although for many the South African labour market is an important source of income, the male exodus has a disruptive influence on family and village life in Botswana. It means for many families the women have, for a large part of the year, the sole responsibility of fending for the household on a day-to-day basis - bringing up the children, washing, cooking, fetching water and firewood, etc. The women take on more and more responsibility for agricultural production; traditionally, men were expected to do the ploughing but now this task along with the other agricultural tasks is carried out largely by women. For the men working away, Botswana becomes a place they visit between labour contracts. There is little time for them to get involved in village development activities. Furthermore, the continual return to the South African labour market creates a sense of dependency on that source of income, and a lack of interest in the developments taking place in their own communities. Their attention becomes focused on earning money and acquiring the symbols of western 'development' - transistor radios, expensive watches, cars, etc., - rather than on contributing to the development of their own village and country. [2]

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[2] This dependent relationship on South Africa also operates at another ideological level. Black people are conditioned by the media and their own experience in southern Africa to believe that they must be subservient to the whites. This has created a sense of apathy in the blacks: a feeling that they are unable to do anything and that they are subject to the more dominant forces of society. In Botswana this has been reinforced by the presence of a civil service that has a large number of expatriates. The internalization of the ideology of the oppressor, i.e., that only whites can organize things, is what Freire calls the "culture of silence".

Attempts to promote rural industries and increase employment opportunities in Botswana have mainly been through the Brigades and the Botswana Enterprises Development Unit (BEDU). The Brigades have operated for a much longer period than BEDU and have a much more extensive operation with thirteen brigade centers scattered throughout Botswana. They were founded in 1965, at Serowe, by Patrick van Rensberg. The original idea was to provide post-primary education for the vast majority of school leavers who could not find places in secondary schools. The emphasis was on practical training in skills that could be used in rural areas (building, weaving, tanning, agriculture, etc.). It was envisaged that the Brigades would cover their costs by combining training with production activities. Few, if any, of the Brigade centres have managed to cover all their costs, and the Ministry of Education now subsidizes most Brigade training programmes. Recently, the Ministry has established a Brigade Development Centre to train Brigade staff, develop common curricula for courses, and to provide other forms of advice and support. Many Brigades, in fact, have developed into centres that combine commercial production units (employing full-time staff) and skill training programmes. Many centres, for example, have brick production yards employing full-time labourers alongside building brigade trainees. Through this approach the Brigades have helped to generate a variety of small-scale rural industries: the Kweneng Rural Development Centre has a small textile workshop, the Maun Brigade provides a marketing outlet for local basket-makers, and so on.

However, skill training is still the main focus of the Brigades. In most cases the Brigades still combine on-the-job skill training with a more formal education programme. The formal education now given is generally different from the development studies curriculum originally introduced by van Rensberg. There has been a shift from the 'all-round' educational curriculum of the earlier Brigade days to a more academically oriented curriculum. The emphasis is now on teaching subjects complementary to the skill being learned.

BEDU, the other major organized effort to promote industries and employment, was set up in 1972 to provide advice, guidance and training to Botswana entrepreneurs. As infrastructural support for this programme industrial estates have been established in four major towns; the premises, machinery, equipment, and tools are leased to approved small scale businesses. These estates house a variety of commercial enterprises, including leatherwork, textiles, carpentry, jewellery, and building. Entrepreneurs are hired, trained and supported with loan capital and advice to run these industries. So far this programme has only benefitted the urban areas.

In essence both of these programmes, the Brigades and BEDU, take a narrow view of development. While the original aim of the Brigades was to develop a graduate with both practical skills and a deeper understanding of Botswana society, in practice the Brigades have concentrated on skill training and neglected the development of socio-economic and political awareness. Both of these programmes tend to equate development with 'economic' development - increased employment and productivity. But the acquisition of technical skills alone are not sufficient for development. They are important, but so are people's outlooks. Their confidence and their ability to understand their situation will affect their ability to cope with and change their situation in any meaningful way. Reginald Green suggests that:

> "The first task of education is to create both an understanding that change is possible and the knowledge of alternatives leading to a desire for change. The second is to enable individuals and communities to identify what types of change they wish to achieve and how to set out to achieve them. The third - not the first - is the training in particular skills and the provision of particular pieces of knowledge."

The starting point then is to challenge the prevailing resignation and lack of self-confidence and mobilize people's interest and participation in changing their own environment. To introduce technical skills in isolation from an understanding of the situation in which these skills are to be used, merely reinforces people's apathy. Training for production needs to be developed alongside and linked with a process of people themselves analysing their situation, deciding themselves what the key problems are and what should be done about them, and organizing together to change their situation.

OODI WEAVERS - A SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIAL NONFORMAL EDUCATION EXPERIMENT

Oodi is a small village of about 800 people. It is located about 20 miles north of Botswana's capital town, Gaborone, on the slopes of Lentswe la Oodi (the hill of the 'tree bark'). The majority of households in the village are engaged in subsistence agriculture. Virtually every family has ploughing land, and most maintain a second home there during the crop season. The village has basic government and commercial services: a primary school, clinic, post office, reticulated water, retail store, and government extension personnel.

Lentswe la Oodi Weavers is located on the edge of Oodi village. The workers are drawn from Oodi and the two nearby, smaller villages of Modipane and Matabele.

Lewycky's metaphor of the Oodi Weavers factory in Botswana as a tapestry is appropriate, for the factory is a complex institution. On the one hand it is an economic institution, operating under workers' control, producing high quality goods, and concerned with making a profit. On the other hand, it is specifically concerned with developing the social awareness of those involved and creating a spirit of cooperation amongst the workers that it is hoped will lead to involvement in some of the broader community and economic development issues that affect the villages in which the workers live. But these two aims are not mutually exclusive, for this industrial experiment has successfully combined the production of high quality goods with an educational process that has broadened the workers awareness and helped to stimulate other development activities in the villages. After seven years of operation the weaving factory is under the complete control and ownership of the workers, and they have made a significant contribution to other development activities in the villages.

What has made this factory successful when many other rural industry projects of a similar nature have failed? To what extent can the experience of the Oodi Weavers be of use elsewhere? The original project proposal looked at the factory as a development model for establishing other rural industries:

> "....the experience and knowledge received through this first village project could be developed into a training programme through which the benefits received could be spread to many others."

With these questions in mind, this paper examines the rural industrial experiment of Oodi Weavers in terms of how it was organised, both as an economic institution and as an educational process, and considers the possibilities for replicating the experience elsewhere.

The weaving factory at Oodi village offers a model of an alternative approach to rural industries. It is based on an understanding of the importance of both:

- social and political consciousness, and
- technical knowledge and skills.

The industrial experiment at Oodi was consciously organised to combine both types of learning: skill training and consciousness-raising.

The original proposal for the weaving project was written in 1972 by Peder Gowenius, a Swedish artist and community organizer. He and his wife, Ulla (a professional weaver) had been working in southern Africa for several years and had organised a craft centre at Rorke's Drift in South Africa (1962-1968), and at Thabana Li mele in Lesotho (1968-1970). Based on these experiences Peder developed a proposal for a weaving factory that would:

> "....train and give employment to about 50 people in a small weaving factory, who in turn by their work and capital accumulation would give employment to at least another 150 people at this factory and in various smaller production units accumulating enough capital, to improve and increase the agricultural production of the village which in turn would give the village and its people

> a general broad experience and the knowledge received through this first village could be developed into a training programme through which the benefits received could be spread to many others." (Lewycky 1977, p36).

The rationale for choosing weaving for the economic base of the factory was largely due to the skills of the Goweniuses, and the fact that a weaving workshop does not require large sums of capital to start. Furthermore, with good market conditions it was felt that a high return on the initial capital investment could be quickly generated.

The Goweniuses eventually became the project managers and started the factory. They steered the factory along a course guided by their own development ideology. They argued that if real development was to take place in Botswana then it should develop its own resources, rather than depend on those from outside - particularly those of neighbouring South Africa. The flow of migrant labour to South Africa has such a large influence on Botswana's economy and society in general that Botswana's ability to develop its own industries, rather than relying on the South African labour market to provide its people with employment, was seen as central to the country's overall development. In this context, the Goweniuses argued that the country's most important development resource is its people:

> "If you do not involve people in the [development] process, then the country will not stand on its own for you have created all the negative influences without any of the positive. Let's not forget that the person is the most important resource and development factor, and that it should not be neglected because of other development factors." (Lewycky 1977, p 256).

Thus developing the individual's ability and self-confidence were seen as being essential to development and to creating a sense of pride, nationhood, and a self-reliant spirit within the country. The individual was considered as the starting point to the development process:

> "It is a matter of backing up the individual first, before trying to stimulate the co-operative spirit, the community spirit. It is a matter of teaching the individual his capabilities and giving him the self-confidence to break out of the restricted social system he is in." (Ibid, p246)

Developing the individual's ability and self-confidence, within the context of social development, was seen as fundamental to his participation in social change and the development process.

The ideology on which the weaving factory is based is similar to that associated with Paulo Freire. Freire's approach, sometimes referred to as the "psycho-social method", is concerned with developing a person's critical consciousness, deepening the individual's awareness and understanding of his environment and developing his ability to critically examine his situation. For Freire men are not

> "....recipients, but as knowing subjects, achieve a deepening awareness both of the socio-cultural reality which shape their lives, and of their capacity to transform that reality through action upon it." (Freire)

For Freire, development is synonymous with the liberation of the individual; that is, helping the individual realise his own identity and his ability to be in charge of his environment.

> "The object is to enable man to recover his identity as the chief agent of his own destiny. Education thus becomes the 'practice' of freedom". (Silva 1973, p41)

This liberation is realised through critical reflection and action - praxis. Praxis comes about through a dialogical process with the people - the oppressed, critically analysing each situation. This critical analysis leads to:

> "....a process of change, and is ultimately identified with change, as the system of education, of social praxis: the awakening of consciousness or, rather instilling consciousness." (ibid, p44).

Similarly the factory was seen as an educational, as well as an economic, project. There was a deliberate attempt throughout the initial period of the project to challenge the workers to carefully examine and discuss their social environment. This was not done in isolation but as an integral part of the production process. Education and work were closely linked.

But within the overall framework of the factory's development there was also a clear recognition of the need to develop a strong economic base, on which the wider social development objectives could be based. The necessity of satisfying the workers' immediate economic needs was considered very important. It was the starting point for the development of the factory.

These two aims of the project - creating employment opportunities and developing the workers' social awareness - are closely related. Both are reflected in the overall organisation of the factory: in its ownership and management; in the production process; and in the village development fund.

WORKERS' OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL

The workers' ownership of the factory was fundamental to the overall ideology on which the project was developed. It was seen as the basis for developing their self-confidence and social awareness, as well as being the key to their keeping control of the means of their economic livelihood:

> "Through ownership and workers' control, the workers' have the best chance to develop a co-operative spirit, a spirit of self-reliance which in my opinion is the only force capable of making this country economically independent." (Lewycky 1977, p10).

To ensure that the ownership and control of the factory - the means of production - remained in the hands of the workers they were not given the shares outright (ie. on an individual basis). Ownership of the shares remains with those working in the factory:

> "It is obvious that the workers should not be given the shares in a factory, but that they should earn them in some way. I hope we agree that gifts and aid in itself can be repressive and as a result of this only the people who work in the factory can own a part of it and have a vote in the Trust". (Lewycky 1977, p10).

Thus the possession of the shares remains with the workers in the factory as a collective and do not become their personal possessions. If a weaver stops working for the factory she does not take the shares with her. Thus there is no danger that over a period of time the shares, and therefore the factory itself, might be controlled by a majority of people no longer directly involved in production.

Initially the ownership of the factory was vested in three agencies that provided the necessary starting capital: Botswana Christian Council (BCC), Botswana Development Corporation (BDC), and Canadian University Service Overseas (Botswana). Representatives from these three bodies, the Kgatleng

District Council, the workers, and the project managers made up the Board of Trustees. Over the first 5 years of the factory the loans to start the factory were gradually repaid and the ownership of the factory now rests in the hands of the workers. It is a registered cooperative with membership limited to those working in the factory.

Initially the day-to-day management of the factory was very much a 'boss-workers' situation. Gowenius argued that this was what people expected: that they had been conditioned to this type of relationship in South Africa, and that people had developed an attitude towards work that said 'do as little as possible, for as much as possible'. Thus in the beginning it was necessary to show firm leadership and show by example that the workers could benefit by their efforts. However after the factory was established and running Gowenius began to train selected workers in management skills. Thirteen women (one quarter of the work force) were trained on a rotational basis in the skills of book-keeping, wages, sales, and ordering. Thus each of the skills necessary for the management of the factory was known by more than one worker, so that the actual management of the factory could be rotated amongst the workers, without creating a small managerial elite. Workers' management was eventually introduced as part of the natural course of events. The Goweniuses were due for a long leave, and as the time for this grew nearer the workers began to express concern about what would happen to the factory whilst they were away. In response Gowenius began management training for the workers. The workers took on the responsibility of running the factory whilst the Goweniuses were away, and the Management Committee became a permanent feature of the factory.

Worker management of the factory has helped to "ground" the conscientization element of this project. It provides the context for praxis - action linked with reflection. "Consciousness-raising" in the Oodi project is not an abstract academic process (as it has been misused in many non-formal education programmes) but is the reflective, analytical part of an on-going struggle by the workers to take over and control the major institutions affecting their lives. The process of getting more and more say over what happens in the factory, including how the profits are used, conditions the whole attempt to deepen consciousness. One becomes critically aware, not through thinking in the abstract about problems, but through wrestling (in both debate and "trying it out") with the real issues and problems encountered in running a collective production process. It is this which really makes a difference in smashing the "culture of silence", in showing in action that peasants and workers can manage their own productive enterprises successfully. It is this which builds the self-confidence and assertiveness which Freire is talking about.

Management of the factory no longer operates on a rotational basis. This was found to be impractical. Now a five member Management Committee has responsibility for taking decisions on day-to-day matters and for arranging things such as exhibitions and opening new markets, and any major issues such as wages or changes in the management, are taken to all the workers for discussion and decision.

During the period when the factory was changing status from a company to a cooperative (after the departure of the Goveniuses) there was a feeling of uneasiness amongst the workers. Many of them were unsure what this change would mean to them and how the factory would operate as a cooperative. There were a lot of rumours, and tension amongst the workers. The main source of tension was dissatisfaction with the Management Committee. Many of them felt that the Committee had become elitist (since the Govenius departure) and that its members were trying to give themselves a higher position and more power within the factory. The workers had made up a song about this: "We're so cold working in the factory but the management are enjoying themselves sitting outside in the warm sun." A group of workers took the initiative in trying to deal with these problems. They put on a drama to help explain the cooperative idea, and to bring the problem about worker-management relations out into the open. The workers' song was included in the drama, which also showed the workers holding secret meetings behind the weavings. The workers were able to laugh at themselves, but more importantly the drama made the problem 'public' and allowed everyone to discuss it together, thereby easing the way for the change-over and helping to deal with the tension and fear.

THE PRODUCTION PROCESS

From the very beginning it was considered necessary that the factory should operate from a sound economic base; that it should be a self-sustaining and a profit-making enterprise. The need for economic viability was essential to the larger development goals of the project. If the factory was not profitable it would not have the resources to encourage other economic and social development activities within the villages. Nor would the workers have the independence to direct their own operations and develop their self-confidence to take decisions. Finally, one needed to demonstrate that a reasonable wage or income could be produced, one which was competitive with South African wages, in order to attract people to stay in the villages (rather than commuting to South Africa or Botswana's larger towns). In fact, the factory showed a profit much earlier than had originally been expected. It was thought that it would begin to show a profit in the third year of production to the tune of about $1500, but by the end of the second financial year a profit of over P24,000 had been made.

A variety of products are produced: bed spreads, wall hangings, carpets, shoulder bags, jerseys and tapestries. They are all hand-made, woven articles and the wool is spun and dyed at the factory. The products, therefore, are both unique in design and colour. Of all its products, the factory is most noted for its tapestries. The tapestries have gained international fame because of their content. They reflect aspects of the weavers' lives, or issues of general concern in Botswana. For example many tapestries show village scenes: agricultural activities, house building, herding cattle, etc. Other tapestries have focused on socio-economic and political issues such as the exploitation of migrant labour, class conflict, the liberation struggle in southern Africa, women's exploited situation, etc.

In the beginning, for the workers, the factory simply represented a place to earn an income. The broader development aims were very much the initiative of the organisers, and not clearly understood by the workers. In straight economic terms if the factory was to attract a steady and committed working force it had to pay wages that would be both competitive with those obtainable in South Africa, and comparable with government wages paid in Botswana. Most of the workers were paid on a piece rate system, with a few jobs paid on a daily basis. Different rates were paid according to the nature and quality of the work and the time involved in the production process. For example, a large bedspread with a complicated design and of high quality weave would earn a worker $10. A bedspread takes about two days to weave. For a tapestry - which takes much longer to weave - workers were paid on a daily rate, plus a bonus according to the size and quality of the weave. The method of calculating wages, and the various rates of pay, were designed so that everyone could earn about the same - approximately $80 per month. It was purposely done to avoid creating an economic elite within the factory. With everyone earning about the same, and no one group of workers operating from a stronger economic position, there was a firmer basis for co-operation and collective decision-making amongst the workers.

At one stage a piece rate system was introduced so that the workers would be encouraged to take more interest in their work. Many of those who had worked before, particularly in South Africa, had developed the attitude that one tries to got the most money for the least effort. However, with the factory Govenius wanted:

> "....to show that the benefits of the jobs were linked to their individual efforts." (Lewycky 1977, p26).

The idea of showing people that the more effort they make the bigger their return is again consistent with the overall aim of developing the worker's self-confidence and their sense of self-reliance.

Lewycky's evaluation showed that the workers preferred an equal wages system rather than the piece rate system and the method of assessing the quality of their work. As part of the piece rate system groups of workers assessed each others finished product. A bonus would be paid according to the quality rating given. However the workers felt that this process, particularly assessing each other's work, created friction among them. At one stage they decided to abandon the piece rate system on the grounds that it created unnecessary competitiveness and that their individual desire to make beautiful things was sufficient incentive to guarantee a sustained, high quality production. For sometime everyone was paid on a daily rate, but when production dropped the workers took the decision to return to a piece rate system.

Returning once more to the overall ideology and development aims of the project, these are quite clearly reflected in the production process. This has already been discussed in terms of the wage system, but it is perhaps even more strongly reflected in the nature of the work. The production of high quality goods requiring high level technical skills and imagination from the workers helps to build self-confidence. This kind of work is not a mechanical, mindless task: it involves creativity and lots of personal input and the end product is something they can take pride in. Over time the workers have increased their weaving skills, taken on more complicated designs and become much more analytical about their work:

> "....the weaver quickly learns the techniques, then after a while there comes a time in every weavers development where she starts to become critical of herself or the work." (Lewycky, 1977, p234).

Thus the actual production of the goods was seen as being important in helping to build a sense of nationhood and self-reliance. The fact that the factory was producing weavings was in a sense immaterial. What was important was the fact that the workers were producing things that demanded effort and care on their part, and that they could see that what they were producing was valued by others - and able to compete with the mass production of modern industry. (Lewycky, p. 236)

SETHUNYA SA DITLHABOLOLO (Flower of Development)

In the broader aims of the project the factory was seen as being a vehicle for stimulating other social and economic development activities in the villages. The original project memorandum specifically states that:

> "....by their work and capital accumulation [the weaving factory] would give employment to at least 150 people at this factory and in various small production units accumulating enough capital, to improve and increase the agricultural production of the village which in turn would give the village and its people general broad development and an increased standard of living...." (Lewycky 1977, p36).

In real terms this has meant stimulating the growth of other small production units in the villages with the help of loans from the profits of the weaving factory. A development fund, 'Sethunya sa Ditlhabololo' was set up in 1975 for this purpose. The factory contributes 25% of its annual profits to the Sethunya fund and loans are made to individuals and groups in the villages for specific, viable proposals relating to economic production.

Money from the fund has been used to start a number of projects. A $200 loan was given to start a carpentry workshop. Money was borrowed to start a small 'tea and bun' service to the factory workers. Another project was a vegetable garden. The largest project, however, was the Oodi Consumer Cooperative. It was started with a $2,000 loan from the Sethunya fund and is now a thriving commercial enterprise that has been able to pay its members a bonus from the first year of operation.

In the past, however, there has generally been a low response to the Sethunya fund. One reason seems to have been lack of information and understanding. People could not understand why the factory should "give out this money". This has been compounded by a general apathy, an attitude of 'wait and see'. The workers have responded to this lack of interest by trying to publicise the Sethunya fund through Kgotla meetings, tapestry exhibitions, and more recently through village dramas. At the Independence celebrations in 1978 a group of workers performed a play about the fund in each of the three villages. Following the dramas a group of villagers applied for a loan to start a small butchery in Oodi. Until then there had been nowhere for people to get fresh meat.

As well as the specific purpose of stimulating other economic activity in the villages, the creation of 'Sethunya sa Ditlhabololo' has significant social and political implications. In a sense the presence of a factory is creating an economic elite in the villages. The high wages mean that the workers are much better off than many people in the villages. The creation of a new economic class in the villages is contrary to the general aims of the project, and Gowenius saw that a levelling out effect was required. Thus one reason for starting the Sethunya fund was:

> "....so that the workers remained part of the village structure and contributed to it. It was a question of their awareness, that they could contribute to the development of others, to the village and to the country. A social awareness in order to balance the negative effects of backing up the individual in order to create the confidence required at the early stage. And then of course why the hell should they be better off?? They should contribute to the village, but they could not appreciate this until they understood and had some control over their own situation." (Lewycky 1977, p246).

The purpose was to develop the social awareness of the workers and not to create an economic elite.

THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS - CONTENT AND METHODS

The factory is not just a work place; it is also a place of learning. The workers learn their craft on the job, with additional skills being developed as they get more experience. Each tapestry, when it is completed, is collectively judged and this gives each weaver a powerful incentive to continue to improve.

This craft or technical training is closely linked with the development of socio-economic and political understanding. The weavings are the medium for this on-going learning process, providing a focus for discussion before, during and after the production of each new weaving. The theme for each new tapestry is discussed by the women before it is woven, with Gowenius serving as animateur. Themes are drawn from real incidents in the women's lives, current events in the newspaper or radio, traditional stories, arguments or issues which come up in their daily work and topics of conversation in the village. For example, one weaving came out of a discussion on a self-help project to build a drift across the Oodi river. When this work project was organized, only the weavers and the poorer members of the community participated. The richer villagers, who stood to benefit much more from the project, refused to help. This issue created a lot of discussion and inspired a weaving which was later used to initiate public discussion within the village as a whole. An example of another source was a story in the newspaper about Zimbabwean children fleeing Smith's troops and crossing the border into Botswana. This caught the women's interest and inspired another weaving. A third example is a question one woman raised: "What is FRELIMO? Is it a football team?" This led to a long discussion about the liberation struggles in southern Africa and several weavings on this theme. In discussing each issue or incident Gowenius asks lots of questions, challenging proverbial explanations (eg. laziness, apathy, "it happens that way") and forcing people to look for root causes. Then the group discusses the way in which the issue can be reflected. Often it's only a matter of identifying the essential parts of the story and getting a sense of focus. One feature in the design of the Oodi tapestries has been the

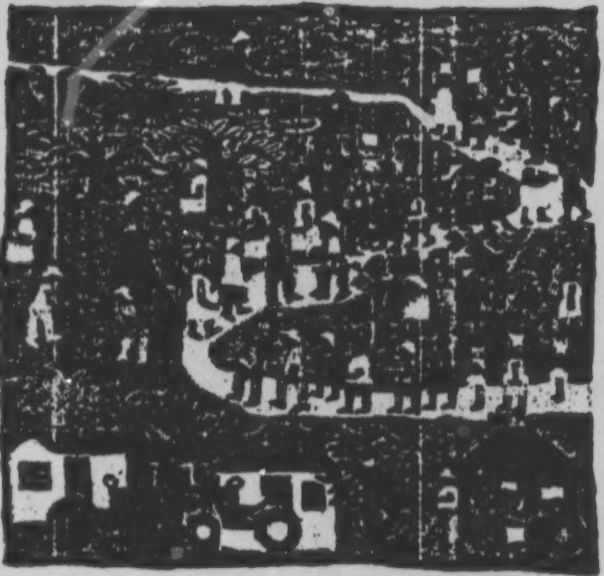
Mmaphala Keeoyatshwene and Masire Marake:

WE HAVE ALSO BUILT A DRIFT OVER OUR RIVER

We have also managed to come together to build a drift over the river. The drift has been helpful, even if some people have opposed it right from the start, saying that it would kill the children and all kinds of other rubbish. People are strange. Some talk and talk but do nothing.

More than 300 people turned up to carry stones and help building the drift, but not a single tractor turned up. So, in the late afternoon, they became angry and said: "What good is it that we do all the work when those eight who have tractors refuse to help? They will use the drift even more than we". In the weave you can see that the tractors are just standing there, useless. The second day there were only about 50 people who helped, so finally we from the weaving mill had to complete the drift.

The drift helps us to cross the river when the river is in flood. But, what is more important, it has also given us a lot of water for our animals.



use of two contrasting situations in juxtaposition - for example, rich and poor neighbourhoods, people in prison and people on a demonstration, rich and poor classes, and the situation in the South African mines contrasted with the situation in Botswana villages.

This helps to show the relationships between things, providing the basis for structural understanding rather than the conventional problem analysis in isolation from the total context.

After the design is agreed on, it is produced on paper and two weavers start to transform this drawing into a weaving. In the beginning Gowenius took major responsibility for the drawings; however over time as the weavers' confidence and artistic skill grew they began to produce the drawings themselves and to take control over the whole creative process. In this sense weaving has become an "indigenous" medium - the technology itself may be imported, but the craft, the artistic aspects have become rooted in the experiences and sensibilities of the Botswana weavers:

> "All people carry a tradition, carry culture of their own and there are just no people without this tradition. Sometimes this culture has expressed itself in dancing or music or words and sometimes pictures. Now in Botswana one can generally say that it has expressed itself in words, in the language and in song. But it has never come out visually. Now if you give the medium to express this tradition, you will only help express that culture more, it is bound to happen that you will express that tradition. You carry out a tradition in a way it has never been put before, but it still comes from the people so it is a part of their culture. Using a new medium is part of their historical development in expressing their culture." (Peder Gowenius, as quoted in Lewycky, p.234-235)

One of the unique things about the Oodi experiment is this important link between production and culture. This is not a mechanical process: the weavers are putting themselves - their history, their lives, their fears, their hopes - into the weavings. As Govenius says, it would have been a totally different experience if they had been producing mousetraps. (Lewycky, p. 236) Their production is a reflection of their total experience and it is this feature which makes it so useful for learning. Their type of production, their craft requires them to think about their existence, their life in the village, the experiences of their men who go away to the mines, and everything going on around them. They reflect on this experience, put this new awareness into a weaving and then use the new weaving to continue their reflection. This process challenges them to think in fresh ways about their environment and leads to a broader understanding. This is the forging of culture, of both rediscovering and making a new cultural identity and developing a new self-confidence. If, however the weavers are forced "to conform to commercial demands or to weave only for requests", the creative element will die and along with it the cultural identity and self-confidence. The weavings may continue to be technically proficient, but they will no longer represent the weavers' own understanding and concerns about their situation. (Lewycky, p.235)

Once each tapestry is completed it is displayed on the wall of the meeting place and the two weavers who created the tapestry start the discussion by retelling the story. Then Govenius intervenes and encourages the workers to talk about the implications of the issue or incident portrayed. In Freirian style he uses a set of questions which get at the relationships between various aspects of the picture. For example, in the

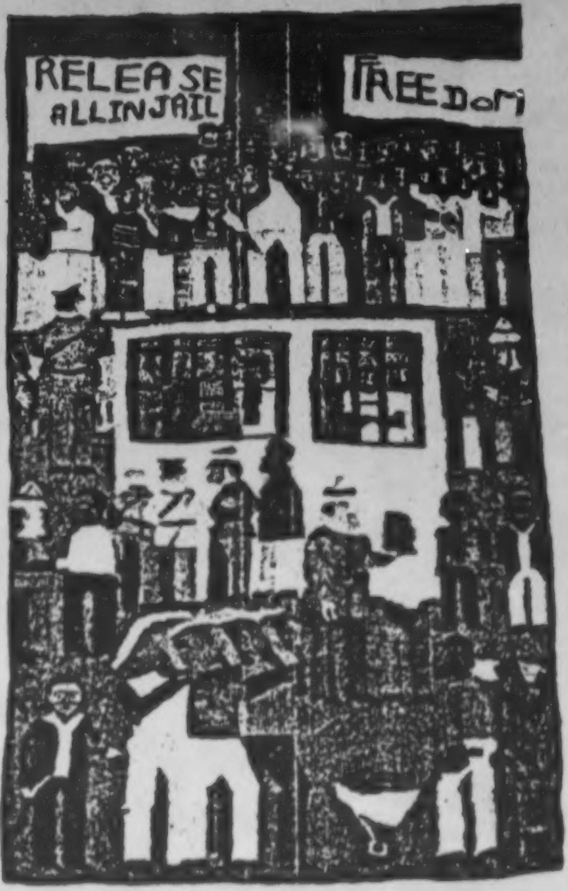
Kereng Nkwe and Mantie Ndaba:

A PLACE FULL OF TROUBLES

No, I do not understand it, because it is a place full of troubles. The black man does all the work and the white man just controls that it is done. You can see the boss down in the left corner and all the police they need in order to keep us down.

They are busy checking permits and papers to make sure that the natives work and work and work for nothing. Many are in jail and many are killed by the police just as it happened in Soweto lately. Do you know that they killed . . . just shot down about 700 school children. There will always be a younger generation prepared to stand up and fight for freedom . . . our own freedom, and not the white man's freedom for which we had to fight during the second world war.

One day there will be a change. One day there will be real freedom.



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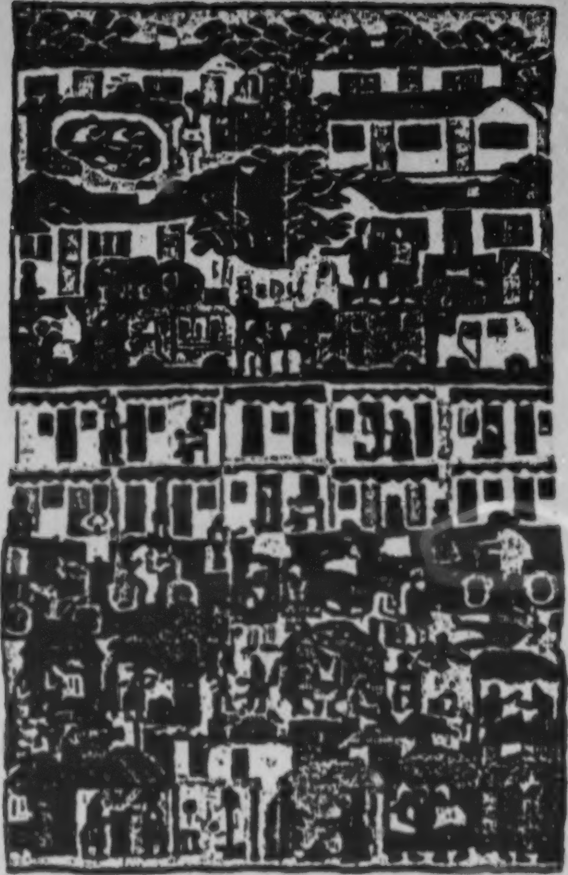

Mmaphala Koboyatshwene
and Mosire Moraka:

GABORONE

There is some work in Gaborone, but as we still have no real industry it is hard to find good employment. This weave shows how Gaborone is divided into three sections.

At the top you see what we call "Old England", the area where the experts from overseas stay.

At the centre you can see "White City". I do not know why it is called that, except for the fact that the buildings are all white. It is mainly blacks who stay there, and then some of the volunteers from overseas.

At the bottom you can see Naledi. Until recently it was not even recognised as a part of the town. You may call it a slum area, and a lot of really poor people stay there.

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Soweto uprising weaving Gowenius would use the following type of questioning: Who is in the bottom left-hand corner of the picture and what is he doing? What are the policemen doing? Who is in the prison and why? Who are standing together at the top of the picture? Why are they demonstrating? What has been the response by the Vorster government to the Soweto uprising? How has this been resisted by black students and workers?

In the tapestry on Gaborone, Botswana's capital city Gowenius would draw out a comparison between "Old England" where the expatriates live and "Naledi", a poor squatter area: What about the activity in each part of the picture? What about the amount of space in each part of the picture? Why are there more vehicles in the top part and more policemen in the bottom? What are the relationships between people in "Old England" and "Naledi"? Out of these discussions which take place before and after the production of each tapestry, the workers develop a better sense of what is going on around them. They start to see the relationships between their own work and other activities in their village, government development policies and programmes, the migrant labour system and other forms of South African control. But this is no mere academic process; the deepening of understanding involves not only the study of issues in the world around them but also the resolution of immediate problems in the factory or village. Nor is it a mechanical process requiring a weaving each time as a tool for discussion. When issues come up - in factory meetings or during regular work, they get discussed and resolved, often without any codification to structure discussion. Political reflection and learning goes on all the time in a totally integrated way largely because of the questioning attitude instilled in the workers. They question new development policies, incidents in the village, events in the news and even the leadership and management of the factory. One example of the women's boldness in a male-dominated society was their recent response to an invitation to a wedding in the village. Having analysed the role of women in Botswana society and the institution of marriage, they decided to perform a drama at the wedding condemning the whole institution of marriage. Fortunately for the married couple they were persuaded to abandon this idea at the last moment. Gowenius cited another example of the women's growing assertiveness and self-confidence in running their own affairs. One must remember that Oodi is part of southern Africa, where

> "people have been under the South African 'boss' system for so long with the white boss protected by the police and the law and the whole apartheid system backing him up...that Black people are conditioned to playing a subservient, "back-seat" role."

Yet the Oodi women have shown they want to control their own affairs and make their own decisions. In the incident described by Gowenius one group of women in the factory, with Gowenius' support, proposed a day care facility for the factory. The majority, however, vetoed the idea, not because it wasn't a good idea meeting a real need but they wanted to demonstrate they could make their own decision without Gowenius interfering. In a way, says Gowenius, they wanted to test him, to see if he would maintain his non-directive approach. (Lawycky, p. 244)

Thus the workers are involved in both creating the tapestries and in

Dipugo Masilo and Sekgorapane Balole:

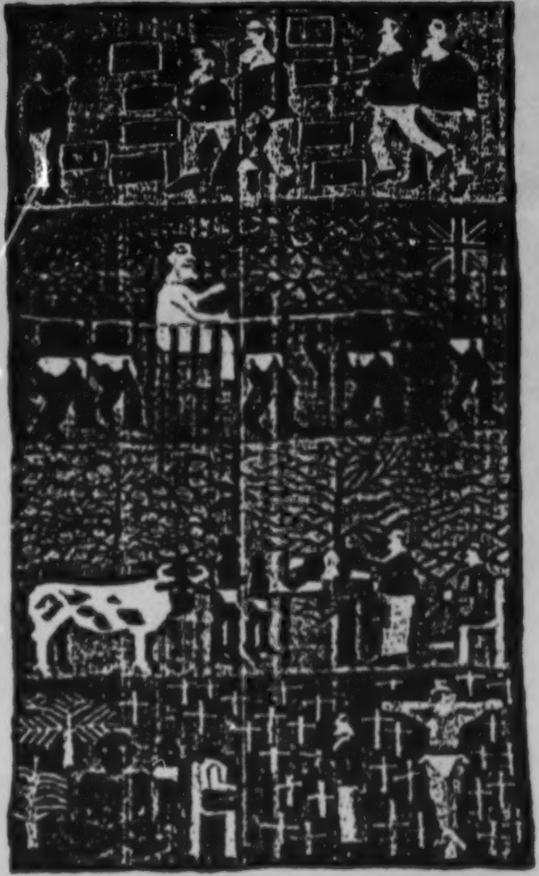
THIS IS HOW WE LOST OUR FREEDOM

Yes, this weave shows how we then lost our freedom. We had not been long in this country before the missionaries came and preached to us about their God and Jesus his son. Some of us adopted the new ideas, and somehow our nation became divided into those who believed in the white man's new God and those who still believed in our own old God.

In the next section of the weave you can see the trader. He came soon after and brought many useless things to us which we traded against our cattle and goats. And it seems that the trader got richer, and we got poorer.

So that we should not be eaten up by the Transvaal we became a protectorate under the English Queen. This was our colonial era and when we had to start paying taxes. This was imposed upon us so that, in order to manage, we had to go and work for the white man. We had to carry him.

The last section shows what is happening now, after Independence. We are not quite sure whether all these people really want to help us or they want something in return from us. We are grateful for all the help given to us, but there is such a lot of whites in our country today . . .



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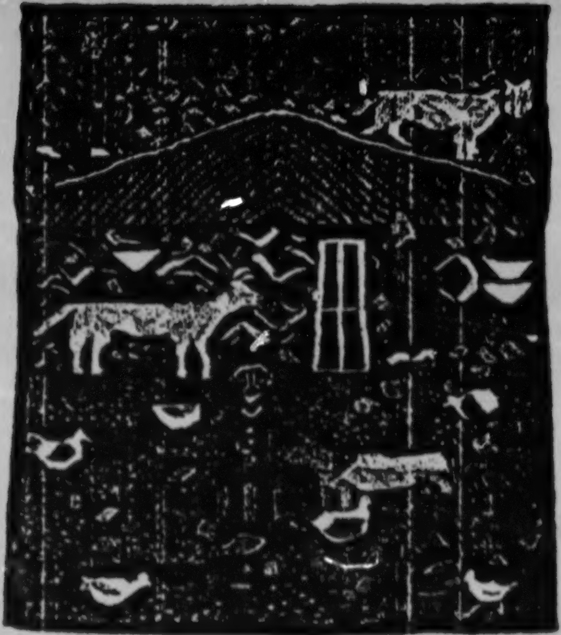

Dipugo Masilo and Sekgoropana Balele:

THE STUPID BOER I

This weave is about a stupid Boer. He was cross because, when he tried to feed his hens which were lying on their eggs, all the others ate the grain instead. Up comes the jackal and says to the Boer: "My boss, my boss, you know that in our part of the word we give the chickens names, and so only the one that is called will come when you feed them". So the Boer was surprised and answered: "Is that so? Then you must teach my chickens". To this the jackal replied: "Yes, my boss, lock me into a rondavel with all your chickens and don't let me out before the full moon, and they will all know their names". You see, this was a really stupid Boer, so he did what he had been told. So the jackal, or the black man, ate all the chickens. And when the farmer opened the door, the jackal managed to slip out before the farmer could catch him.

So since that time the Boer runs behind the jackal shouting: "I will still shoot you one day, you bloody jackal".

You see, in many stories the jackal, in fact, is the black man.

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discussing the issues reflected in them. It is a continuing cyclical process of "codifying" and "decodifying". Non-formal education is built into production, with production serving as a vehicle for developing people's artistic skills and their awareness.

The tapestries themselves represent a powerful set of 'codes'. They deal with a range of themes covering: the history of the colonial invasion and nationalist resistance; the impact of migrant labour on the Botswana family and village life; class tensions and male-female relationships; and specific development issues in the village, among others.

History is a strong theme in the weavings and is presented in revisionist terms rather than those of the standard colonial history. The rediscovery of the real history of the Botswana is a major source of cultural revival and a growing self-confidence.

Another feature is the use of traditional stories. Gowenius has discovered a rich heritage of traditional stories which assert the black man's continuing resistance to white oppression in South Africa. They tell of the subtle ways that the blacks in South Africa outwit or ridicule the whites and undermine the apartheid system. The value of these stories lies in the way they subvert the "culture of silence", showing that the oppressor's culture and mentality (which they have internalized) is bankrupt and strengthening their self-confidence and will to resist.

In addition to this on-going more spontaneous form of learning, Gowenius also ran for one year a study group programme, during working hours, to give all the workers a political and economic orientation to the weaving craft. This included discussions on the history of textiles, the relationships between raw materials and the processes leading to a final product, and the evolution of clothing from skins to modern synthetics. All this was related to industrialisation, and the competition between mass-production and hand-made materials. The workers were given a sense of history of the textile industry (and alongside it a history of southern Africa), a context in which they could place their own production unit and see its significance in terms of the modern-day textile industry. These discussions helped to show that inspite of the economic domination of South Africa, organized groups of workers in other parts of southern Africa could create their own productive enterprises and keep them within their own control.

These discussions did not take place in isolation from their working environment. They focussed on the key issues of their work - workers' control, exploitation, co-operation, self-management, social commitment, etc. Of course, they were dealing with these concepts in practical terms in their daily work in the factory, but these discussions helped to deepen their understanding. In these study circles the workers were encouraged to reflect on their experiences of running the factory.

On one occasion the factory workers used the tapestries as an educational tool with people in the villages. Weavings were exhibited in Oodi, Matabele, and Modipane. People invited to come to see the tapestries, were told of the stories and issues by the workers, and engaged in discussions on these themes. However, this "extension" role of the factory workers has, until recently been a relatively minor activity. It has only been with the creation of their own popular theatre group that they have started to be more serious about sharing their new awareness and insights with others in the village.

On returning from a workshop on theatre and development in June 1978, two of the weavers set up a drama group. Their first play was used to publicize the Sethunya fund. Another play was created to bring out into the open some of the tensions and misunderstandings related to the management of the factory. The group has also used drama to promote discussion on major problems in the village. They have, for example, performed one drama on the poor relationships between the local primary school and parents, and another relating to the tension that had developed between clinic staff and villagers. Both these dramas brought into the open sensitive situations, and allowed people to challenge the local authorities and air their grievances in a way that was not disruptive to village life.

Through their involvement in the factory the workers are more socially and politically aware. They have developed a critical understanding of the social and political forces conditioning their lives, and drama provides another means for them to involve themselves in the social development of their villages.

CONCLUSION

The factory has been a successful project. As a commercial enterprise it is still thriving, and it has stimulated other economic activities in the villages. In terms of community development the workers are becoming more and more involved in community affairs. Thus, it is worth returning to the original question of how far the experience at Odi provides a model for rural industrial development. Undoubtedly much of the initiative for the factory and its growth came from the Gowenluses. With their practical skills and their ideological base, they steered the factory along a particular course of development. But if one looks beyond their personal input and examines the principles and organisational structures on which they developed the project,then the feasibility of using it as a model for other projects becomes clearer. The more significant points are:

1. The overiding aim of the project was to build the self-confidence and social awareness of the people involved. All the major social and economic organisational features of the factory reflected this aim.

2. Workers ownership was ensured by allowing only those who work in the factory to own the shares. Workers control on a daily basis was realized through a process of collective management, with major decisions being made by all the workers.

3. Economic parity was maintained amongst the workers by a wage system that would allow everyone to earn approximately the same each month.

This economic parity helped to provide a firm basis for collective management and to avoid the development of an elite group within the factory.

4. The production process was such that the workers were able to develop their technical skills and develop a sense of pride in their work.

5. The factory was not an isolated entity from the rest of the village: through the development fund and through its own educational work (through the weavings and drama performances) it kept its links with the village and supported other development activity.

6. Central to the whole project was the political and social education of the workers. Through a Freirian-type conscientisation process the workers were encouraged to examine the social and economic forces affecting their lives - including those of the factory. This education was directly linked to production.

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INDIGENOUS CHANGE AGENTS AND
NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

by

H. K. Ranganath

THE CONTEXT

India is a country of hoary antiquity, with a civilization of its own which emerged four thousand years ago. It is a land of many races, ethnic groups, religions, languages with 'innumerable' dialects and variegated traditions, superstitions and deep-rooted value systems. At the grass roots level, the Indian society is a "complex system of varied classes, clans and aboriginal tribes, with caste and creed-based barriers, cultural complexity and illiteracy".

Basically, India is an agricultural country, notwithstanding the positive steps taken towards industrialization. After long and agonising periods of foreign domination, the country regained its freedom 33 years ago from the British, as a result of a non-violent mass-revolution. Gandhiji spearheaded the movement, and by his achievement, he is regarded as one of the greatest men of this century.

Challenges faced by the country are many and varied: adult education, rural upliftment, health and sanitation, modernization and expansion of agriculture, equitable distribution of food and other essential commodities, housing the homeless millions. More frustrating than these is the question of the multiplying population which depletes the resources of the country and make its future bleak. The country's population has reached the staggering number of 690 millions, the majority of whom are village-based and below the poverty line.

During the past three decades, however, the country has set itself to educate the rural masses, often through non-formal education. A major aspect of this task is to induce their voluntary participation in the national development effort.

The current mass adult literacy campaign is a national, multi-agency programme involving voluntary organisations and central and state governments. It has high level political support and adequate resources for a national effort. It has increased the literacy rate from 29.3 per cent in 1971, to almost 40 percent in 1980.

CHANGE AGENTS AMONG RURAL COMMUNITIES

Background

Message, Medium and Masses are the three major factors in the context of communication, whether it is formal or informal. Failure of effective communication in India has been traced to improper use of the message or medium and/or inadequate understanding of the wants and needs of the masses. Other problems have included time-lags between, (a) the media service, (b) inter-personal action/reaction, and (c) the availability of essential and effective service (medical in the case of health and family planning, implements and fertilisers in agriculture). The gaps needed to be plugged.

Even when these gaps were plugged and 'package-deals' offered, communication has sometimes been counterproductive. The cause for such failures has been the ineffectiveness of the change-agent in influencing the target community (group, family, couple, individual) to alter their traditional ideas and values. The villager suspected the communication since the promised benefits were neither immediate nor spectacular. A promise of 'the ultimate good' held no lure for the rural Indian. Conditioned by tradition, he feared that any suggested change would destroy his traditional beliefs and values. In the case of family planning, he questioned why other people should be interfering in his personal affairs.

Communication in India tended to be "top-down", flowing like rain-water down a pyramid, neither reaching the ground nor maintaining its own purity. Mass media channels were no doubt glamorous but lacked credibility with the rural masses. They were too impersonal to trust. The situation warranted the creation of a group of workers who would be able to discuss the issues on a PERSONAL level and convince the villager. These workers were to be trusted change agents.

It became necessary to choose the prospective change-agent with the utmost care and to change the top-down vertical mode of communication into a horizontal mode. This would bring a sense of equality between the communicator and the receiver of the message. This sense of equalness would forge an intimacy which made communication informal, personal and meaningful.

There was resistance to the change-agent when he was brought 'from outside' the community. Villagers felt that the 'outsider' was being imposed on them, to shake the foundations of their traditional beliefs and community life. In the case of a highly sensitive and personal theme like Family Planning, they resented the imposition of young female college-educated field workers. "The fashionable young woman who is totally inexperienced in the joys of bringing up a family has no business to insult my wife and meddle with my family affairs", said the villagers. The Government Doctor, Mid-wife and even the Health-Worker, were viewed with suspicion, when they tried to explain the advantages of family planning. The use of financial and other incentives deepened the villagers' suspicions. They came to view the family planning programme as a Government programme, and not theirs and lost confidence in the government-appointed change agent. The change-agent himself was uncomfortable as an outsider ignorant of the local situation.

The traditional folk performer and other change-agents who are part of the village structure.

In an effort to deal with some of the above problems the folk performer was identified as a local communicator with enormous popularity among the villagers. He 'enlivened' communication with entertainment; he was capable of converting a theme into 'sung communication' or 'enacted information'; he could create a face-to-face situation in the field between the message giver and the message receiver. More than all, he unconsciously used traditional methods of informal education.

In India, especially South India, early education for the child is informal. From the age of four, he is taught by a method of repetition to memorise the names of days in the week, months of the year, seasons and stars, addition, subtraction, division and multiplication, songs, sayings and stories from the classics on moral themes, etc. His teacher is his own grand-father or elder uncle and the time of learning is early in the morning. The foundation thus laid stands him in good stead when he goes to school, and in fact, throughout his life.

The traditional performing arts are extensions of the deeprooted and strong institution of informal learning and the performer is taken as a guru or teacher. The villager responds enthusiastically to these performances and holds the performer in high esteem.

On his part, once convinced of the importance of a development theme, the folk performer is always effective both on and off the stage. He becomes a successful change-agent because he is whole-heartedly accepted by the villagers as one of their own. He is listened to with attention because he is widely travelled and experienced. People do not hesitate to argue with him over a debatable point. More often than not, they get convinced in the bargain, to the point of total acceptance of the message and the follow-up action.

Apart from the folk artist, there are other categories of potential change agents within the village structure. They are found in the villages of South India and can be grouped on the basis of their traditional status and social functions. Examples of such traditionally respected local dignitaries are: head of religious institution, village purohit (who performs marriages and religious acts), priest of the village temple, the old teacher of the village school, traditional interpreter of the classics, leader of the village drama troupe, music teacher of the village, the old woman who dispenses herbal medicines, and the story-telling old lady of the village.

The other traditional roles which are unavoidable in the daily life of a village and could also be effective change-agents are: mid-wife, barber, mantravadi (witch-doctor), tailor, carpenter, money-changer, goldsmith, blacksmith, mason, cobbler, and toddy seller.

Frequent visitors who also have communication potential are: postman, bangle seller, hawker, and travelling trader of women's wear.

These local dignitaries and service-providers spend a lot of time with villagers on an individual or group basis. They are informal, are held in high esteem because of their services to the village, and are influential on personal matters. They can become effective change-agents once they are convinced of the importance of a development theme. The communicator's task then is to involve these influential people, motivating them to accept development messages which can then be passed on to the villagers. Having provided the message it is desirable for the communicator to let the change-agent work out his or her own methods to convince the villager of the importance of a message and lead the villager towards its acceptance.

Recently, on a visit to a few villages in the state of Karnataka, I met some of these prospective change-agents who are all but ignored. I was convinced at the end of the visit that some of the persons who belonged to one or the other of the three categories mentioned above, possessed the talent and capacity to play the role of change-agents, despite the fact that some of them had reservations about family planning.

Traditional midwives deliver two-thirds of the babies in the world and are credible sources for communication about contraception, baby care, sexual behaviour, etc. They are generally female, past middle age, illiterate and have been taught midwifery by their grand-mother, mother or other relatives. In India, traditional midwives have low social status, but elsewhere in the Third World they have much more prestige, due to, (a) their perceived trustworthiness coming from the same socio-economic class as their clients, and (b) their perceived competence, stemming from their advanced age, religious devotion and special knowledge and skills. Because of their extensive contact with fertile women and their high credibility, traditional mid-wives are a potentially important part of national family planning programmes in most developing countries as auxiliary workers. Traditional midwives have been used in this way in India, Indonesia and Pakistan.

Traditional midwives may be uniquely positioned to communicate to the most hard to reach audience: parents who are rural, low income and relatively traditional.

Formerly, in the Indian village, 'a mother of many children' automatically assumed the role of a midwife and often proved effective in this job. Her forte was her own experience and not any technical training and she was fairly ignorant of hygienic practices. In the village, she played an important role because of the dearth of trained midwives. During the last five years (1976-1980) government has started to upgrade the skills of traditional midwives, giving them intensive training for a month on an attractive stipend. The successful ones received a certificate, a midwife's kit and an ongoing incentive for each successful child birth conducted. In my home state - Karnataka - in central-southern India which has 26,826 villages, 5266 traditional midwives have been trained. The majority have become accepted as effective communicators and change-agents in family planning.

Of the three categories of potential change agents, Heads of Religious Institutions, Village Purohits and Priests in the village temples command the greatest respect. Once convinced, these men are capable of influencing the masses and involving their followers in welfare projects. The Imam, a Muslim religious leader of Bagevadi and Shiva Kumara Swamiji of Sirigere, Head of the Lingayat math are men of indomitable courage; they deviated from the dictates of tradition and made their followers accept family planning. Such action on their part was not at the Government's request but based on their own assessment of the benefits of family planning. These are authoritarian leaders whose word is not questioned but implicitly obeyed. There are literally hundreds of Imams and Swamis in India among whom the progressive ones could be identified and consciously involved in development programmes as communicators or change-agents.

Other 'traditional personalities' - the aged teacher of the village school, the interpreter of the classics (Gamaki/Puranika), the leader of the drama troupe, the music teacher, the medicine woman and the story-telling old lady - also have local influence without being authoritarian. Each plays an important role in the cultural, social and economic life of the village and is considered 'wise' because of his or her knowledge and experience in a particular field. Villagers engage them in dialogue on issues of personal doubts and family difficulties, looking for solutions. Party feuds are patched up, marital alliances forged, natural resources conserved and idling children sent to school at their instance. Some of them like the teacher and interpreter of classics are already involved in village welfare projects on a voluntary basis. However, so far there has been no discernible effort on the part of government to utilize this potential source.

Those in the second category of functionaries - e.g. the barber, witch-doctor, tailor, carpenter, gold-smith, etc., have a committed clientele, who sit and listen while the service is being provided. Each is a friendly professional with lots of time to discuss any subject of interest, private or public. A dialogue will naturally ensue in such situations leading to discussions and sometimes, to conviction and action. The village barber, in particular is a fascinating character with considerable potential as a change-agent because of his capacity to carry on a dialogue with any and every one. He listens to many clients, serves as a counseler, match-maker and trusted adviser, and often moves among near-by villages and gathers news and impressions while at work. The traditional Indian barber is itinerant. He travels with a small kit, and is a great performing artist. His razor is not always sharp, so he often leaves indelible marks on your scalp, and if the cuts bleed, he may use his saliva to stop the wounds. But the barber is important because he also patches up quarrels between people. He deals with people on an individual basis. He is about 50 years old, and people listen to him. He takes 45 minutes to shave a head, and he is constantly talking. He could be useful in conveying family-planning messages to rural people.

It is true that the institution of the itinerant barber is vanishing - hair-cutting saloons are being established even in remote villages - but the dialogue remains a part of the barber's operation and gives him a remarkable opportunity to influence his clientele about development. The village "witch-doctor" is another highly regarded village personality. He has been trained in reading the sacred verses which control the stars and spirits. He is looked on with awe and respect by the villagers who bring their problems to him. He finds the cause of the problem and gives orders for appropriate penances. He may give talisman with Mantras inscribed on them or sacred ash as an effective agent to counteract other magical problems as well as to protect the individual from various unpleasant situations. Elaborate ceremonies may be conducted in which the witch doctor visits homes and performs pooja (worship) in a variety of ways to promote health.

The institution of the traditional healer is very strong in India as in Africa and in South-East Asia. Village people prefer a person who knows their disease in a way known to them. Instead of hearing medical jargon, they know that when they visit a traditional healer the illness is due to evil spirits, disturbed humours or impure blood. Many believe that the healer's Mantras are as good as the doctor's medicines and feel that both are required for rapid and complete recovery. Healers establish personal rapport and a personal influence on the patient. In fact they involve the whole family and society in the healing programme which has a high therapeutic value. They cure by faith.

Surveys indicate that between 30 and 40 million Indians suffer psychiatric problems, serious enough to require urgent attention. However, there are only 500 psychiatrists, 400 clinical psychologists and 100 psychiatric social workers to provide them cosmopolitan health care. Most of the mentally ill are cared for by indigenous healers. On the village scene, possession, violation of taboo, intrusion of disease objects, black magic, meditation, etc., are common. Haunting by evil spirits is significant. Treatment methods consist of exorcism, the physical extraction of disease objects, counter-magic, talisman, chanted rings, sacred ash, prayers, offerings to temples and institutions, etc. The traditional healer spends time discussing personal issues with his clients. Efforts are now being made to involve the traditional healers in health programmes. Collaboration of traditional healers with psychiatrists has already yielded very encouraging results.

The village priest and the village purohit who performs marriages and other religious rituals are also held in high esteem. They are always consulted in decision making and are considered wiser than the majority, with the exception of the school teacher. Protection of the community from evil forces is one of their important duties. They are informal and intimate with the villagers and wield considerable influence. For example, Mr. Sesha Shastri, a well-informed purohit of Maddur in Karnataka covers many surrounding villages and is held in high regard. He is progressive in his attitude and is completely convinced about the value of family planning. He is not commissioned by government, but totally on his own initiative has persuaded over 120 families to accept family planning methods.

Other craftsmen of the village like the tailor, carpenter, goldsmith, blacksmith, mason and cobbler have a committed clientele and are in a good position to put across development messages. These craftsmen are hired to do a particular job. Once the assignment is through, they are surrounded by stray people and conversation ensues. If the group has even one enlightened person, he can play a pivotal role in turning the tide against blind faith and superstition. If the craftsman himself can be convinced, given training and assured of ongoing incentives, he can also play a positive role as a communicator in the village.

The toddy seller has an advantage over the village tea shop, for his clients linger on for longer periods in the evenings, and discuss any topic under the sun in a leisurely manner. The situation is ideal for effective communication when handled with considerable care.

Those in the third category - travelling salesmen and village postmen (who usually cover 6 to 8 villages in a week) - are eagerly awaited and welcomed by villagers. They serve an important role as inter-village communicators of news and views. They carry different experiences from village to village and are capable of generating goodwill among the villagers and assisting in development programmes. The postman is a government servant and holds out a great potential as a persuasive communicator, if trained for the job. No effort has so far been made to use this inter-village communication capacity for promoting development messages.

Conclusion

The hiring, training and deployment of these indigenous change-agents and communicators is a challenge to nonformal education. Of the three categories of potential communicators who are part of the village structure the traditionally respected local dignitaries like the heads of religious institutions, purohit, priest, the old teacher, interpretors of classics, leader of performing arts, the medicine women and the story teller can not be hired, for this would offend them. They should, in the first instance, be convinced of the new theme (e.g., family planning) and encouraged to advocate support for it among their followers. Though authority-based, these leaders should remain casual in their approach. In the ultimate analysis, they are the advisers of the village community on issues where they are unquestioned, e.g., religion, education and behaviour patterns. Their goodwill and active involvement would mean smooth sailing for the development programme.

In the second category of functionaries, the traditional midwife has been identified, trained and involved in the family planning programme, with successful results. Efforts are now afoot to earn the goodwill of the witch doctor of the village carrying out health and sanitary programmes. He could be extremely effective in changing villagers' attitudes and behaviour patterns. It is risky to try to hire him, for he may become impulsive and turn against the programme. It is the importance given to him rather than a little money that can tempt him to involve himself in positive plans of rural upliftment. Other functionaries like the tailor, carpenter, goldsmith, blacksmith, mason and cobbler can be convinced and then hired for the programme. A fully motivated postman can be an effective change-agent when trained and incentives given.

In the Indian rural context a successful change-agent is one who converts a 'Government programme' into a 'People's programme' in the eye of the villager. This means that the indigenous communicator, to remain effective, must not become identified as a Government-agent. He or she must remain a villager in order to command the confidence of the villagers. He should be involved in useful work and have enough 'functional leisure' to speak to his clientele with conviction, while at work. There is a host of such functionaries in every Indian village, crying to be harnessed for anti-traditional development programmes. It is only recently that their existence has been noticed and their potential recognized for communication and educational work. The situation is promising and calls for further experiments to identify the positive ones and train people for effective utilization. Once a methodology is evolved, the results would pave the way for massive work along these lines in developing countries.

THE BANJAR SYSTEM: TRADITIONAL BALINESE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION AS A VEHICLE FOR FAMILY PLANNING AND NUTRITION EDUCATION

by

I.B. Astawa

INDONESIAN SETTING

Indonesia is the largest country in Southeast Asia, both in population and in area. It is an archipelago consisting of about 13,000 islands stretched along the equator 3,400 miles (5,500 km) from the western tip of North Sumatra to the eastern tip of West Irian.

The total population of Indonesia is more than 140 million people, making it the fifth most populated country in the world after China, India, the USSR and the United States. This large population is very unevenly distributed. About 65% of the people are crowded into the islands of Java and Madura, which make up 7% of the country's total land area. Some areas of Java have the highest rural population densities in the world, with 2,000 or more per square mile (772 per square km). In contrast, Sumatra, which forms 25% of the nation's total land area, has only 16% of the total population, and Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo), which forms 28% of the total land area, has only 4% of the total population.

The island of Bali is one of the 27 provinces of the Republic of Indonesia. It occupies an area of 2,147 square miles (5,561 square km), lies east of Java separated by a narrow strait less than 2 miles (3 km) wide.

The estimated population of Bali in 1979 is 2.3 million people, making the density about 400 per square km and the most densely populated island in Indonesia after Java and Madura.

Administratively, the island is divided into eight regencies (Kabupatens), the boundaries of which date back to the eight kingdoms that existed prior to the Dutch conquest of 1907. Each regency is divided into kecamatans (sub-districts) and each kecamatan is divided into villages. There are 50 kecamatans and 564 villages. Each village is further subdivided into banjars (community organization or ward) and there are 3727 banjars in the whole of Bali. A banjar consists of about 50 to 100 households. It is the banjar organization which has been one of the keys to successful family planning in Bali.

The 1971 census revealed that educational attainment was low among Balinese women, 64.8% having no formal schooling, 18.1% less than six years, and with only 13.2% having completed the six year elementary school programme. Less than 4% had progressed beyond elementary school. In 1971, 73.3% of the economically active male population were farmers. 16.8% did manual work and 9.9% were in sales, clerical or higher status positions. Of the female population aged 15 - 44, only 31% were economically active and, of those, half were employed in agriculture. Thus in terms of urbanisation, income, education and employment, Bali might appear rather ill-suited to the successful promotion of family planning.

The total fertility rate (TFR) in 1965-1970 was 5.8, the crude birth rate (CBR) 43.9, and the crude death rate about 19 per thousand. Bali's recent high growth rate (2.6 to 2.8% in 1970) has left a young population with 43%

below age 15. Of a Balinese population of 2.1 million, 460,306 (27.7%) were women aged 15-44, but because of the relatively late age of marriage only 308,846 were currently married. Therefore, in 1971 the number of couples eligible for family planning services (as indicated by the number of married women aged 15-44) constituted 14.5% of the total population.

FAMILY PLANNING ORGANIZATION

The Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association (IPPA) was established in 1957 in Jakarta as a voluntary organization linked to the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). However, the political situation at that time was unfavourable and the spread of the idea of family planning was very slow. Government accepted a pronatalist policy but initial family planning promotion was restricted to the educated elite and medical personnel.

In 1967 the new government of Indonesia under General Soeharto adopted family planning as a major priority in their development programme, working closely with the IPPA. They set up a government-controlled co-ordinating body, the National Family Planning Co-ordinating Board (BKKBN), which co-ordinates the work of eight implementing agencies - four government agencies (Army, Ministries of Health, Education, and Information) and four private agencies (IPPA and three national church organizations representing the Hindu, Christian, and Moslem religions).

The initial objectives of BKKBN were: (1) to make a 50% decrease in the fertility rate of Indonesian women by the year 2000; (2) to recruit in the first five year plan (1970-1974) six million new acceptors with the goal of averting 1.7 million births; and (3) to lower the growth rate of Indonesia by 0.8% over the same five-year period.

In the first five-year plan, the family planning programme was concentrated on the six provinces of Java and Bali which is the most densely populated area of Indonesia. In the second five-year plan (1974-1978) 10 additional provinces joined the programme, and in the third five year plan (1979-1983) the programme was expanded to the remaining eleven provinces, thereby covering the whole country.

The family planning programme has an unusually strong governmental endorsement; however BKKBN operates as an independent body outside the control of any specific Ministry. Its national director reports directly to the President and the provincial directors directly to the Provincial Governors. This power and official backing has given BKKBN the capacity to make links and work with a wide range of non-government and government organizations. In addition, its authority through two Presidential Decrees and high priority in government's development programme, gives it considerable support from politicians - an advantage not available to the heads of regular government departments.

The Bali family planning programme consists of three parts: motivation and education; contraceptive services; and back-up services - training, finance, logistics and administration.

The motivation and education programme is an extension programme using family planning field workers who go from house to house and talk with eligible couples. The field workers are recruited from the villages and must have a minimum of junior secondary education. There are 231 field workers for the whole of Bali, roughly one field worker for 10,000 people.

In addition to an extension network, BKKBN uses mass media, e.g. mobile film units, television, radio, newspapers and traditional media like shadow puppets (*wayang*) or traditional drama (*arja*).

Contraceptive services are provided by a network of 150 family planning clinics and six hospitals. Each clinic is staffed by one trained midwife, one assistant midwife and one clerk, and is supervised by a medical doctor who covers three clinics each. Since the number of doctors is limited, midwives have been trained to insert the loops and to give advice on family planning contraception.

THE BANJAR SYSTEM

The Banjar System is a key organizational base for family planning in Bali. A *banjar* is a "ward" or a sub-unit of a village covering a certain geographic area and consisting of about 50 to 100 households. (There are 3727 banjars in Bali). Members of a banjar are obligated to assist each other in marriages, home festivals, and funerals. Banjar members also work together in building houses for members, repairing the temples and organizing village festivals.

Each banjar has a meeting hall which is used for monthly meetings, religious celebrations, weddings, funerals, etc. Monthly meetings are well attended because of a system of banjar fines: household heads who miss meetings without explanation are fined Rp.200 (50 cents US); those who send a message about their absence, Rp.100; those who arrive one hour late, Rp.50. Members are summoned by the ringing of a bell. Meetings deal with community and religious affairs and are chaired by the kelian (banjar head).

The banjar meeting hall is also a place of leisure recreation for the men. They spend most of their time there gossiping, training their fighting cocks, watching rehearsals of plays or of the orchestra, or just sitting. If the banjar is prosperous, it organizes elaborate banquets with music and entertainment.

Each banjar has a common fund which is used for banquets and for loans to needy members. The common fund comes from fines and from the produce of the banjar rice fields which are worked communally. The banjar also owns the village orchestra and the dancing properties - costumes, masks, and headdresses - which are stored in a special room in the banjar hall.

The kelian (banjar head) is elected at five-year intervals. Originally a traditional institution, the kelian has been incorporated into the local government structure as a base-level government representative. Before 1969 this position was honorary: the kelian received only token remuneration in the form of extra rice at banquets, a percentage of the fines, and gifts from members for services rendered. Since 1969 kelians have been receiving monthly honoraria (Rp. 10,000 or about US$16) from the provincial government as compensation for this work. Their main income, however, continues to come from farming.

WHY USE THE BANJAR SYSTEM

The Banjar system was chosen for three purposes in introducing family planning in Bali. Firstly, it is used as a forum for discussing family planning and overcoming resistant attitudes within the community. Secondly, it is used to accumulate the statistics needed in planning and to record acceptors. BKKBN has a centralized reporting and recording system to monitor new acceptors based on data sent by each clinic twice a month to Jakarta and processed on a computer. This system makes it possible to follow the cumulative total of new acceptors and, as the continuation rate for each method is known it is possible to calculate the current use or prevalence rate. The banjar system, however, offers the possibility of providing more detailed information.

Thirdly, the banjar system is used to extend the community-based family planning system. 150 clinics for the rural area of Bali are not enough to serve 564 villages and 3727 banjars scattered all over the island. By linking the clinics with the banjar system it is possible to bring information and services about family planning as close to the community as possible. The kelian can act as a depot holder for oral contraceptives, condoms and vaginal tablets.

HOW THE BANJAR SYSTEM IS INVOLVED

The kelian and field worker work together in using the banjar as a vehicle for family planning, information, and services. With help from the fieldworker, the kelian registers all eligible couples in the community and records them on a map of the community. On the map a different colour is used for IUD acceptors (blue), pill acceptors (red), condom acceptors (green) and a blank box is left for those who have not yet accepted family planning. Each month the family planning situation in the village is reviewed, using the map. In order to do family planning work, the kelian is trained on a three-day course in BKKBN's Provincial Training Center in Denpasar.

In the monthly banjar meeting various development issues - including family planning - are introduced along with matters relating to the development of the banjar. The family planning fieldworker attends these meetings. These discussions provide community support for and encouragement of the use of family planning by banjar members.

The prevalence of contraceptive use in the island has risen every year and according to the banjar report of December 1979, 285,066 eligible couples, or 12.32 percent of the total number of the population (2,314,465) are now registered in the banjar system. Of this number 212,961 are using family planning - or 73.54 percent of the eligible couples. The IUD is the predominant method (table 2).

Table 2. Contraceptive use (Bali, 1979)

Method	Number	Percentage
Pill	34,026	15.98
IUD	143,495	67.38
Condoms	24,737	11.62
Spermicides	397	0.19
Tubectomy	8,059	3.78
Vasectomy	1,308	0.61
Injectable contraceptive	939	0.44

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE SUCCESS OF THE BANJAR SYSTEM

The Bali experience shows that, in the absence of industrialization, the idea of family planning can spread, adoption of effective contraception can reach a high rate, and the crude birth rate can decline substantially. Bali lacks the conditions conventionally regarded as conducive to widespread adoption of family planning. Incomes are low, largely based on agriculture, people are poorly educated, health standards are low, and attitudes are largely traditional, shaped by Hindu beliefs and practices. In spite of all this, the Bali programme has achieved an acceptor rate as high as that obtained only in a few developing countries (e.g. Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and South Korea) where there has been profound economic development and conditions are more conducive to the widespread adoption of family planning.

According to the data from the World Fertility Survey (1976) the total fertility rate (TFR) in Bali was 3.8. This is a major reduction from the rate of 4.6 in 1974 and that of 5.8 in 1970. The overall decline in fertility in the years 1970 to 1976 was 34.5%. The reasons for this success are given below.

Most BKKBN officials are young (thirties and forties) and have maintained their links with the villages in which they grew up. They actively participate in the Balinese traditional systems, returning to their own villages for periodic ceremonial activities.

This continuing informal contact keeps them informed about village reality and helps them plan programmes that are genuinely responsive to the needs and behavioural patterns of the people. Because they value Balinese ideals and behaviour, they can freely draw on traditional institutions and know how to enlist the cooperation and help of local leaders - respecting their leadership and understanding the value of their contribution.

Another contributing factor has been the ability to show the compatibility of family planning with Bali's Hindu religion. At first it was felt that Hindu beliefs (eg. that every baby brings its own benefit from heaven, and the Balinese belief in reincarnation) might discourage participation in the family planning programme. Fortunately, however, the Balinese religion proved tolerant of family planning. Family planning promoters drew on mythological stories (eg. Mahabarata) to demonstrate the value of a small family norm - eg. the victorious battle of the five Pandawa brothers over the 100 Kurawa brothers was interpreted to show that quality is better than quantity.

Another cultural tradition that has proven useful in promoting a reduced family size is the method of naming children. A Balinese child is usually given a name consisting of three or four parts, an optional marker indicating sex and a name identifying the given name by which the person will be formally addressed. It is the birth order name that is of particular interest here. The most common names for the first four births in a family are as follows:

First born: Wayan, Gde, Putu (literally 'the oldest')
Second : Made, Negah ('middle')
Third : Nyoman ('youngest')
Fourth : Ketut ('unplanned')

For fifth and later children, either the cycle is repeated or each child is named Ketut. Clearly, the system of naming supports a traditional ideal family size of three or four.

In one survey of Balinese women in 1973 the most commonly mentioned ideal family size (four children) was attributed to this naming system. Family planning personnel have used the naming system in explaining why couples should limit their childbearing to three children.

INTEGRATED FAMILY PLANNING AND NUTRITION PROGRAMME

In 1980 a family planning and nutrition programme was launched as a co-operative effort of BKKBN, the Department of Health, and the Department of Agriculture. It was set up to overcome resistance to family planning based on people's reaction to the high infant mortality rate (125 per 1,000 population). Many women who accepted family planning in principle were reluctant to stop at two children because of fears about the survival of their infant children. High infant mortality was attributed to low levels of nutrition. By improving the nutrition of under-five children, BKKBN felt that couples would be more secure about the health of their children and therefore more willing to limit their family. They decided that this programme required a collaborative approach together with the Departments of Health and Agriculture.

The respective roles of the three partners in this scheme are:

a) motivation of the community through the network of fieldworkers and banjars (BKKBN);

b) provision of health services - medicines, iron tablets, Vitamin A, oralit, immunization and health information (Department of Health);

c) advice on plants and vegetables which can be cultivated in home gardens as a source of nutrition (Department of Agriculture).

A new voluntary cadre of village women has been created for this programme, selected by the keliane. The number of nutrition cadres recruited is based on a ratio of one cadre per twenty under-five children. Each banjar has from two to ten cadres. Their job is to weigh the children monthly, fill out health record cards, write monthly reports, give cooking demonstrations, and refer acutely malnourished children to the Health Centre. The BKKBN field-workers monitor this activity, collect the reports, and provide basic supplies (Vitamin A, oralit, iron tablets, etc.).

The weighing activity is held in the banjar hall. With the help of the mothers, the nutrition cadres weigh the children, record their weights, give them medicines (Vitamin A, iron, etc.) and where necessary, immunizations. Then a cooking demonstration is given to the mothers and the children have lunch together.

This programme at present covers only 211 banjars but over a five-year period will be extended to all of the 3727 banjars in Bali.

INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF FAMILY PLANNING AND NUTRITION PROGRAMMES

BKKBN has also started a programme of income-generating activities as a means of improving the general health of the family. Women who have accepted family planning are given courses in making handicrafts, cakes, candies, soap, etc. which can be used by the family or sold in the market. BKKBN has also negotiated a loan scheme with the banks so that the women can purchase pigs for breeding.* Each woman receives a loan of Rp. 90,000 (or $150 US) which is enough to buy about six piglets. The loan is expected to be repaid over three years with 1% interest per month. In order to organise the credits, groups of 20 "acceptor" women are formed in each banjar. The BKKBN fieldworker acts as the leader of the group and is responsible for paying the monthly interest and the final payments. For this service the fieldworker takes a 5% commission of the sale price of the pigs. This pig-raising scheme not only increases the incomes of family planning acceptors but also acts as an incentive for those who have not yet accepted family planning.

CONCLUSION

This case study has shown how an indigenous community institution - the banjar - has been used successfully as a vehicle for family planning education, services, programme monitoring and a support programme of nutrition education and income generating activities.

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* Balinese women raise pigs in house-yards but this is normally done on a "share-breeding" basis, i.e. a rich person gives her a piglet to be raised and after one year of breeding the pig is sold; half the money goes to the piglet-owner and half to the breeder.

INDIGENOUS MENTAL STRUCTURES: THEIR FUNCTIONS AND LIMITS IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATIONAL PROCESSES FOR DEVELOPMENT

by

C. Bonanni

When a briefing on "communication" is offered to a non-formal educator who will be responsible for socio-educational activities in a community-based development project, generally he is asked to be very cautious in communicating innovative messages to the people. He must choose with attention the words which he will utilize: they have to be the same as those commonly used by the people and, in the case of new words, he must pedagogically grade their presentation. He is also requested to be very careful in transferring messages through visual images: they have to reflect local representations of the reality, they have to be pretested, refined, etc.

All kinds of suggestions are indeed given to him, but very rarely is he advised on how to avoid mistakes in dealing with the inner epistemological processes of his interlocutors. He is never asked to make an inventory of the logical patrimony possessed by the people with whom he works so that he could know, respect, and use as far as possible, in his educational action, their syntactical structures, i.e. the mental frames in which their thoughts are organized and interrelated.

We feel, on the contrary, that whoever is involved in educational development, has to pay great attention to the above mentioned aspects. To support this affirmation we would like to share with the reader, in the following lines, some self-explanatory examples drawn from direct field experiences.

An agricultural extensionist explained once to a group of farmers that: if they had had in the preceding rainy season so many mm of rain they should have put in the soil so many kilos of fertilisers but if they had not had a sufficient quantity of rain then they should not have put so much...but...etc. At the end he realized that the farmers did not get the message he was trying to transfer to them. Were they incapable of understanding the meaning of each one of his words? Surely not, because they were expressed in their own mother tongue; the way in which he was framing those words in phrases were only foreign to them and for that reason they were unable to understand them. He should have searched in advance, through group discussions, for the syntactical forms adopted by that rural population in framing hypothetical phrases and past-future temporal relationships and adopted them. For example, in the case of money borrowed in the past and to be paid in the future that population was utilising the following expression: "The money I got three months ago is still lying on my chest, but very soon, I hope, it will lie on my back."

Other farmers attending a literacy course were showing high capacities in mental calculations while their achievements in written arithmetic were very poor. The reason for this appeared to reside in a dichotomy between the procedures adopted by the teacher on the blackboard and those followed by the farmers' minds. Encouraging results were achieved when, finally, the method for teaching basic arithmetic was founded on the farmers' mental approaches, as shown by the following table:

```
279 +
183
```

1. Read aloud

   "Two hundred and seventy-nine plus one hundred and eighty-three"

2. Write down as said

```
200  70  9
100  80  3
```

3. Add the parts in the order which is simplest to you. (this will vary from person to person)

```
e.g.  (i)  200  +  100  =  300
            70  +   80  =  150
             9  +    3  =   12

     (ii)  300  +  150  =  450
           450  +   12  =  462
```

```
365 -
128
```

1. Make up from the lower to the higher number, as when counting out change.

```
e.g.  128  to  130  =    2
      130  to  150  =   20
      230  to  280  =   50
      200  to  300  =  100
      300  to  365  =   65
```

2. Now proceed with addition: read aloud and write as said:

```
                     2
            20
            50
   100
            60       5
   ---------------------
   100     130       7   =  237
```

To underline the uncertainty of a marketing operation, a non-formal educator, while discussing with a group of poor blacksmiths, decided to utilise in his speech verbs in their subjunctive and conditional modes, but the unknown sound of their endings caused humorous reactions from the group. Why? The audience was composed of people using, in their daily life's conversations, only one verbal mode: the indicative. Their "present", indeed, was so aleatory that there was no need for the subjunctive or conditional. They knew, of course, the future tense but it was utilized only for the Divinity! By making use, in his speech, of their comprehensive indicative the social workers could have received more attention and his words produced more impact.

It should be emphasized, however, that in certain cases, the transformational process requires the mastery and the use of concepts, as well as of logical structures and relationships which are not present in the rich and articulate mental patrimony of traditional rural groups, because the experiences from which these logical elements generate have not yet been gained by them. These new mental tools have to be considered as necessary preconditions for the success of an educational action leading towards behavioural, cultural, and social changes. Some of them are inherent in the microlife of the soil and the water, in the time/output, time/control, cost/benefit and are relevant for a farmer who has adopted advanced agricultural practices. Others are inherent in the rate of growth, in the biological causes of endemic diseases, in the organic functions of the human body, in the nutritional value of food and are indeed relevant for a family life education programme. They cannot be taught by indoctrination but must be induced from a series of propaedeutic experiences ad hoc put in motion at the very inception of the socio-educational process.

To be more specific let us introduce some examples. How is it possible to request a bush farmer to dig a ditch in an absolutely straight line if he does not possess the respective concept? They are in fact human groups who master the concept of a circle, which is physically very present in their environment, as well as the practical skills for drawing, shaping, and building circular forms, objects, and houses, but not the concept of the straight line. Therefore, before telling them to dig a straight ditch, they have to be led towards the formulation of the concept of the straight line through pragmatic exercises and demonstrative working experiences.

A teacher of nomadic groups who wishes, at a given moment, to transfer to the latter some visual messages utilising the law of the perspective without giving them previous experiences about it, after many efforts will be obliged to give up. The concept of perspective, indeed, does not exist in their minds. If he shows them a drawing presenting two constructions: the smaller in the background and the bigger in the front, they will consider the bigger one as superior in value vis-a-vis the smaller one. This latter construction in fact, will for them be the house of the slaves or of the animals, but rarely that which is more distant from them than the other.

Those who have worked in field level health education programmes know that it is impossible to transfer a message on the interrelationship between the germs present in the polluted water and the intestinal diseases of the children, if the concept of microbe, i.e. of a living being, so small that it cannot be seen by our eyes has not been acquired in advance by the people to whom the message is addressed.

Similarly it is impossible, when operating in a society where the words "right" and "duty" have the same significance (as in the case of southern Italy), to instill habits related to duties and rights until the moment when the logical preconditions for their differentiation are created in the minds of the members of that society.

In reading the above lines one could be induced to think that only the members of deprived or poor rural communities need to reinforce their logical patrimony with new conceptual acquisitions. This is not true. In reality it is a two-way process. It goes also from them to the members of the so-called learned society, as illustrated by the following story.

In 1870 the Baron von den Decken - as told by himself in his diary - was navigating upstream the Juba River in the Horn of Africa, hoping to find its source. Each evening he stopped and camped until dawn on the river bank. One evening the guards of his escort started to light a fire with wet branches, making a lot of smoke. The Baron ordered them to stop, but they explained to him that with the help of the smoke they were trying to prevent fever. The Baron could not understand what they were telling him and requested them to make more comprehensible their words. They repeated to him that by making smoke they were driving away the mosquitoes which were bringing them fever. The Baron could not accept their justification because in his human experience at that time the relationship between mosquitoes and malaria fever did not exist. Thus, he ordered them to put out the fire. The chief of the escort before lighting the fire should have explained to him by which experience the interrelationship between mosquitoes and fever came to their mind and only after he could have hoped that the Baron had approved and shared the benefits of their preventive action.

Something similar happened to a western seaman sailing in the Pacific. He was not able, in fact, to understand and accept what his local counterpart was telling him about the utilization of a navigation plan based on directions suggested by the net of influences and forces which binds the constellations. His refusal, however, did not last eternally: it disappeared when he absorbed the cosmological experience of his new environment.

Finally, we can say that those responsible for non-formal education activities for development should

a) elaborate their messages, respecting and using as much as possible, the participatory groups' lexical, grammatical, and syntactical structures as well as their semantic values;

b) Pragmatically contribute to the formation of the new logical elements which are compulsorily required by the transformational process.

If we will be permitted to paraphrase the words pronounced by C. Attlee, the day on which UNESCO was created, we could say that since reality starts in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that we have to establish the basis for its development.

PART II: INTRODUCTION

FOLK MEDIA, POPULAR THEATRE, AND CONFLICTING STRATEGIES FOR SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE THIRD WORLD

by Ross Kidd

The popular performing arts are being increasingly used in education and social action in the Third World. In Brazil the national literacy organization, labour unions, fertilizer companies, the church, and political parties are commissioning public performances and booklets of folk poetry promoting their respective interests. (Bordenave) In Sierra Leone development researchers are turning to indigenous expression, including proverbs and drama, not as a means of pushing any particular message, but as an indicator of the contradictions of the development process itself. (Johnny and Richards) In China amateur drama groups in each village provide regular entertainment, propagate party themes, and help people to redefine themselves in relation to massive structural changes. (Judd) In India the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has a permanent drama division employing full-time and part-time troupes engaged in government propaganda work; a private mime troupe tours the slums of Delhi with sketches on community development, health, civic and other themes. (Kidd)

In southern India and in Mexico popular educators working with a landless labourers' movement and an urban slum-dwellers organization respectively have become performers, producing dramas along with community members as one aspect of their educational and organizing work. (Kidd, Nuñez)

In Jamaica and Nigeria the reverse has happened: theatre workers have become popular educators, learning these skills and applying them along with their theatre skills in organizing workshops and community-based programmes with women's groups, farmers, and other community groups.* In Bolivia and Botswana, with very little outside intervention, a Native movement and a women's weaving co-op respectively have created their own dramas as a form of popular expression, self-education and a means of building and consolidating their organization. (Rojas, Byram)

The most frequently employed labels for this wide range of activity are "folk media" and "popular theatre". While often used interchangably they represent two distinct approaches. Folk media is the attempt by development communicators to use "people's media" for propagating the ideas of modernization; "popular theatre" is applied to cultural/educational activities in which the popular classes present and critique their own understanding of the world in relation to a broader aim of structural transformation.

While there are methodological differences between these two approaches, the essential differences are not technical. They are not methodological options open to technocratic choice; they represent distinct political-economic views of the world and contradictory material interests.

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* In Nigeria, Zambia and Kenya theatre workers and adult educators have worked together on programmes of community education. The most noteworthy example is the teamwork of a Kenyan literacy teacher and Kenya's most prominent writer and playwright Ngugi Wa Thiong'o in a community education theatre programme involving hundreds of landless rural squatters as a follow-up to a literacy programme. (Ngugi wa Mirii, 1980)

These differences can only be understood in the context of the history and political economy of the Third World. Each of the case studies in this section provides a description and analysis of its own national context but the common denominator is a history of a) colonialism and imperialism and struggles against foreign political, economic and cultural domination, and b) attempts by the dominant indigenous classes to consolidate their economic, social and political power - met with resistance by movements of the oppressed classes.

People's culture has been one of the battlegrounds in the struggle between the dominant and subordinate classes for centuries. For example in the early days of colonialism the church used syncretic drama (their own imported drama structure mixed with indigenous cultural expression) to propagate the faith, denounce Islam, and legitimize the colonial invasion. Even earlier Islam consolidated its hold over parts of South East Asia, using Wayang shadow-puppetry as one medium of proselytization. Indigenous cultural expression sparked some of the earliest revolts against colonial rule, the most notable being the slave rebellion in Haiti, (which was triumphant in 1804) in which evening drumming acted as a cover for the preparations and planning. (James, 1963) The colonial authorities recognized the potential of indigenous culture in building and stiffening resistance to their domination and used various approaches to control it - banning drumming and destroying drums on the slave plantations in the Caribbean, replacing indigenous dance-dramas with colonizer's drama in the Philippines and Latin America, trying to suppress traditional dancing in Africa, etc. Indigenous cultural expression was also affected indirectly but powerfully through the changes in political-economic structures: migration to the towns, new modes of production, the shift from subsistence to cash crop production, etc. changed the nature of village "drama", gave rise to new syncretic forms for the urban proletariat, and commoditized some of the indigenous theatre groups. More recently cultural work played an important role in national struggles for independence, building an indigenous or national identity, arousing a spirit of revolt, and raising morale during the liberation war.

Mass Government-sponsored Theatre

After independence many of the new governments organized a national programme of government-sponsored theatre to promote their own ideas and programmes. This took essentially two approaches - a) one a mobile approach using paid troupes (represented by the case study on the Indian Song and Drama Division)[*]; the other a mass mobilization approach (represented by the Chinese case study).

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[*] The other Third World countries which have run mass government-sponsored mobile theatre programmes are Indonesia, Malaysia, Ghana, and Mexico. Recently Lady Marcos of the Philippines started to organize a mass propaganda programme through theatre but this was scotched at the last minute by her husband who recognized its potential use by the anti-Marcos movement.

The mobile approach was in many cases the continuation of the colonial mobile propaganda campaigns involving cinema vans and occasionally performing troupes and was often run by the information wing of government - the Ministry responsible for mass media.[*] It was seen as a face-to-face supplement for the mass media and played a similar role, ie. putting across the development messages of centralized planners. Its coverage was sparse (restricted by the financial resources to pay the troupes) and the narrow use of financial incentives together with the top-down, bureaucrat-controlled structure made for limited commitment by the performers.

In contrast the mobilization approach, used most notably in China, created a mass movement of village-based amateur drama groups supplemented by the existing network of traditional performers.[**] The intervening factor in this case was not a mobile theatre troupe, but a middle-class animateur who worked in an area for a period of time, forming and training groups, and building organizational links between them. Distinguishing features of this approach included: a) the active participation of villagers in creating their own culture (rather than depending on the occasional visit of an outside professional troupe); b) its largely voluntary nature: it is a people's movement rather than a government department; c) the close identification of the largely working class performers and audiences with the themes being promoted and performer involvement in play production (rather than relying on externally imposed messages and scripts).*

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[*] The most notable use of the indigenous performing arts by colonial or foreign authorities was a) in war-time recruitment propaganda (eg. India, East Africa) and b) counter-insurgency operations in Malaysia, Laos, and Vietnam. (Brandon, 1967; Mahoney, 1975)

[**] The Federal Land Development Agency (FELDA) in Malaysia adopted a much smaller-scale mobilization programme, creating a drama group in each of its new settlements.

A critical difference, though, is the overall political purpose. The Indian programme served to legitimize and reproduce the existing structures. The Chinese programme was organized

a) within the cont[illegible] major structural changes as a reinforcement for class struggle, and

b) later on as a means of helping people to redefine themselves in relation to the new structures.

The Chinese programme, however, should not be seen as an exercise in "conscientization"; it was concerned with persuasion, with changing attitudes and not with a wide-ranging analysis of the issues or the contradictions produced by these changes.

Both the Chinese and Indian programmes worked with the folk performing arts but their methods differed. The Indian programme defined this transaction in "modern-traditional" terms and developed a working knowledge of which types of traditional drama would permit modern messages and how to insert them.[*] The Chinese transformed both the contents and the form. Unlike the Indian programme where the feudal values were left largely intact (except where they directly contradicted a modernization message - eg. pronatalist sentiments) the Chinese rooted out reactionary feudal values and this required a transformation of the form itself.

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* Unlike the Indian programme which started five years after Independence, the Chinese cultural programme grew out of the Communist struggles against the Japanese and Kuomintang and played a vital role in the land reform movements.

Folk Media

While these early experiments with the folk performing arts were carried out in the 50's and 60's, the concept "folk media" only gained currency in development circles in the 70's. By this time the original "top-down" communication model had taken a beating and various alternatives were being examined.[**] Folk media was proposed as a supplement to the mass media, making up for the latter's remoteness, vertical structure, and urbanized language with "face-to-face", "bottom-up", "dialogue" in the "language and idiom of the people".

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[*] Their experience has provided a good deal of the Folk Media theory adopted by UNESCO, IPPF, and other international agencies. (Ranganath, 1981)

[**] This shift in communication paradigm represented two divergent interests: the "efficiency" group simply wanted media to be more persuasive - in its existing format it could only provide "general awareness", rather than "conviction"; the other group argued on democratic grounds for a more participatory approach.

This interest in folk media, though, was not a mere shift in the taste of development communicators. It coincided with critical changes in the political economic strategy of the ruling classes. During the previous two decades (1965-1970) there was no material reason for a mass communication and education programme directed to the rural poor - the marginal farmers and landless labourers. Development was a matter of "betting on the rich" and was aimed at the large capitalist farmers, especially during the Green Revolution when the new capital inputs were directed to and appropriated by the rich landowning class. Mass media did its job of supporting this type of development, getting information out to the rich farmers about miracle seeds, loans, irrigation, etc. But by the 70's the contradictions of this monopoly capitalist development programme - increasing landlessness, unemployment, impoverishment, and urban migration of rural peasants - required a means of dealing with the tensions and conflicts. McNamara's Little Green Revolution prescribed a strategy for directing development resources and welfare services to the rural poor, as a means of containing social discontent. It included no major structural reforms (eg. land reform). (Feder, 1976)

This new strategy, in communication terms, required ways of a) getting to the rural poor, many of whom were outside the influence of the mass media and b) persuading them to accept the new dominant class solutions for poverty (birth control pills, loans, modernization ideas, mini-Green Revolution technology, etc.). Folk media was one approach that suited this purpose: the traditional performers (eg. an estimated 150,000 in India) were out in the villages, not stuck in the central offices or radio stations, and had day-to-day contact with the people; as a familiar and popular cultural form, folk media could be more convincing than the modern mass media. Folk media were to be tools for putting across information, changing attitudes and habits, and legitimizing and mobilizing participation in government development programmes, within an informal context of entertainment and a community get-together.

The Indian case study shows that, in spite of the way in which "folk media" is described, there is no real dialogue, local participation and bottom-up communication: folk media are simply used in the same vertical structure as mass media. The imposition of centrally determined information and the lack of engagement in critical analysis and collective action, produces more passivity and dependence and a feeling of technical and cultural inferiority, all of which can be exploited by the dominant classes to reinforce their position.

The "people's performers" become simply the mouthpiece for the dominant class and their credibility as a genuine folk expression of the people is destroyed. People's cultural resources are appropriated to express ideas and viewpoints which are against their interests. Under the rubric of "participation" folk media is used to "involve [marginal farmers, landless labourers, and slum-dwellers] in their own domestication" - a more effective means for socialising them to accept their situation without critical reflection. (Williams, 1971) They are simply integrated more effectively into the system, diverted from radical change, and persuaded to accept the blame for their situation (the result of their own "self-inflicted", "traditional" culture) and remedial, technical measures to alleviate a bit of the misery:

> [Modernization] culture can only offer themes about techniques and domestic morals as an educational message. (Rojas)

As Bordenave points out in his paper, the purpose of folk media is not to persuade people "to vaccinate, to implant IUDs, to fight parasites, or to eat vegetables". By turning the folk performers into mercenary propagandists, folk media experts undermine their credibility and destroy people's culture.

Popular Theatre, Popular Education, Popular Communication, and Structural Transformation

The increasing extractive demands of national and multi-national capital lead to contradictions and crises which give rise to their dialectical opposite: struggles by agricultural labourers, marginal farmers, urban squatters, marginalized tribal groups, and other exploited groups to defend themselves against the pressures of surplus appropriation and to fight for land, better working conditions, and structural changes. In these struggles the peasants and workers are often joined by middle-class activists who have been alienated by the dominant structure and some of their skills are often useful in the educational and organizing process.

A new form of education, communication, and cultural expression has emerged in this counter-effort as a means of supporting the organizing, empowering, conscientizing, and structural transformation process. Its object is not to legitimize the existing social structures and exert social control, but to encourage people to question and challenge the structures. Rather than "banking" people with modernizing information and techniques and reinforcing dependence on the outside expert, it encourages the growth of people's own analysis, self-confidence, and fighting spirit. Unlike conventional development communication which posits a self-inflicted "culture of poverty" to explain poverty and justify an approach which pours new (modernization) wine into old (traditional) bottles, the popular educators start with a structural view of poverty - that it is political economic structures not people's habits and traditional attitudes which keep poor people in debt, without land, lowly paid, etc. They recognize that popular education should lead to challenges against the oppressive structures and challenging oppression cannot be done in a passive way. The starting point then is developing active challenges to the structures and this must start with the oppressed reevaluating their own understanding of reality - overcoming their fears, their view of oppressors as allpowerful, of themselves as passive objects of fate and recognizing the possibility of structural change. This in turn represents a growth in confidence and self-esteem - a major step towards class consciousness. It also means taking action against victimization and exploitation in an organized way. The Jamaican, Nigerian, Mexican, and Indian (ACPC) case studies exemplify various aspects of this counter-approach.

The common starting point is the validation of the culture of the popular classes. (White, 1980) The folk poetry of North-East Brazil, the testaments of Jamaican women, and the indigenous dances of Mexico are all cited as genuine expressions of the popular classes - a means of communication which has survived through the centuries as a seemingly autonomous form of expression, protest, "relationship, communion, escape, fantasy, beauty, poetry, worship". (Bordenave) The recognition and salvaging of people's culture is a key aspect of rebuilding people's confidence.

People's culture, however, is more than folk songs and dances. The popular classes not only express their own concerns, but they also generate their own knowledge and analysis. (Johnny and Richards) Examples of a people's science are given from Sierra Leone and these are used to counter the stereotype of "development as modernization" which ascribes conservatism, traditionalism, lack of science, etc. to the peasantry. (Johnny and Richards show that this so-called "traditionalism" is not the result of isolation from the modern world but is socially produced by the monopoly capitalist system into which the 'traditional' village is integrated). People's perspectives on their situation, expressed in the form of proverbs, can provide a dialectical point of comparison with and critique of development orthodoxy.

While not disputing the existence of people's knowledge, the Sierra Leone, Brazil and Mexico case studies show that people's cultural expression reflects the dependency relations of the society in which it functions.[*] This leads to Nuñez important distinction between a) people's culture - the autonomous expression, values, customs, etc. of the people which has imbedded within it ruling class ideology and b) popular culture - that which is built out of selective aspects of people's culture that reflect their true interests, eg. elements of protest and resistance against the structures of domination. This leads in turn to popular education - the process of "rediscovering" these genuine popular elements and "returning them systematically to the people". (Nuñez)

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[*] Johnny and Richards part company with the rest of the authors after this point. While agreeing that people's cultural expression is riddled with ruling class assumptions, they are not convinced of the value of "conscientizing" the peasantry; they are more interested in using peasant perspectives (expressed in various folk forms) to reeducate blinkered development technocrats. Bordenave makes a similar argument: don't commission the writing of folk poetry to be used as 'conscientization codes' - start with the existing folhetos which contain within them the contradictions needed to provoke discussion and analysis of the hegemonic process. However, he actively encourages their use for analysis purposes by popular education groups. Crow and Etherton, on the other hand, show how these two perspectives can be brought together into the same workshop - attended by both farmers and development workers - in order to deepen the understanding of both parties through a different dialectical process in which people act out various courses of action and pose the contradictions in a dramatic way.

The framework in Bordenave's paper developed by Fausto Netto is not only useful in analyzing the content of folk culture (eg. the folheto) but it is also a very useful tool in analysing the content of much development communication work.

The Jamaican and Nigerian case studies show one way of organizing popular education. They both represent attempts by theatre workers to convert their art into a conscientization medium. This is not theatre for the people - an outside group performing a "well-made play" and then getting the audience to talk about it. The "audience" or participants become the actors and theatre becomes the medium through which they express themselves. Self-expression is vital in developing self-confidence and participation. In the Third World 'creativity is seen as a subversive activity - as a result people have been conditioned to feel they have no talent, no creativity' (a Columbian popular theatre worker). Through demonstrating peasants' and workers' capacity for creativity, participatory drama helps in transforming them from their traditional role of passive observation to one of active engagement in dramatic action - an analogue for the same transformation (the Freirian goal) in real life from fatalistic passivity to assertive action.*

Expression itself though is not enough. Drawing out people's grievances and sense of dissatisfaction is an important step in building class consciousness but the process must go further, encouraging people to get a more critical understanding of the source of their oppression and working out concrete strategies and tactics for action.* In this stage of the process the participants act out various ways of transforming reality and discuss the implications of each 'rehearsal'. Through dramatization, analysis and re-dramatization people discover the real constraints and contradictions which inhibit change and possibilities for overcoming these obstacles.

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* Augusto Boal whose experience in Peru inspired much of this work discovered the importance of getting Peruvian campesinos to express themselves through a dramatic means only after failing to spark an active response with a verbal dialogue:

> Silence for them was a weapon.
> For me that was exasperating:
> I talked and talked and they just
> stared at me.....Finally, I said
> 'If you don't want to speak, at least
> show something, show an image'
> (Michalski, 1980)

Drama in this case is not the finished "well-made play" of a professional folk media troupe prescribing a fixed and narrow understanding of reality; drama is the "play-which-is-never-finished" performed by the popular classes and providing an ever-deepening analysis of their situation, the possibilities for action, and the implications of each course of action. Discussion is not the artificial ritual of conventional political theatre tacked on at the end. (If people are left out of the action and dialogue in the play, it's difficult to turn them on like a tap when it's all over.) The discussion is woven into the process - both in the rehearsal (eg. arguing one's case with a bureaucrat) and in each post-rehearsal analysis. The discussion, the thinking, is not a separate activity - it is the scenario-making process itself. (Crow and Etherton)

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* This is the problem with many of the "Lenguaje Total" experiments in Latin America which represent a form of "sponge theatre", drawing out people's grievances and frustrations but not using that energy and anger to do something about the source of the discontent. (Gutiérrez, 1974)

This is a process controlled and shaped by the participants to "write" their analysis of their situation and their version of the future. Instead of receiving the finished texts on theatre of the dominant class in their role as passive observers, they are making their own theatre and using it as a means of developing their own ideas and trying out various strategies for overcoming oppression. In this sense it is a much more dynamic form of participation - people are not only discussing images of reality but they are also creating them and changing them to suit their analysis of reality. It is no mere discussion of possibilities; it is a rehearsal of those possibilities, a means of testing out their appropriateness and implications before actually doing them in real life.*

Ideas in this field have evolved over time: a perfect formula did not spring into being right from the beginning. Etherton and Crow trace the various stages in the development of popular theatre in Africa - showing how the analysis of the contradictions of the work at each stage gave rise to succeeding improved stages.

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* The Jamaican, Nigerian, and Mexican experiences build on the work of Augusto Boal, a Brazilian popular theatre practitioner who deserves to be better known by adult educators. As a close colleague of Paulo Freire, Boal developed an interest in conscientization and the possibility of using theatre for popular education in Brazil. However, his main experience came after he had been exiled from Brazil, in Peru where he worked on the national literacy campaign. Eschewing the conventional recruitment and motivational role assigned to theatre, he experimented with ways of using theatre within the literacy classroom - as a medium of expression, analysis, and trying out various strategies for structural transformation. (Boal, 1978)

The Mexican case study shows how this dialectical process of a constantly evolving methodology and analysis takes place within one organization. In the beginning IMDEC became locked into a role of broker of services and conventional extension work rather than a catalyst for popular action and struggle. However, through constantly evaluating its work, it recognized these limitations, changed its strategy, and helped create a popular movement organized around a core group of community leaders. Theatre played a powerful role in this movement in maintaining communication with the residents of the barrio, developing understanding of the issues for struggle, and rallying support for struggle.

The IMDEC (Mexico) and ACPC (India) case studies represent a more advanced stage of the process - in comparison, for example, with the Nigerian work. The Nigerian workshops spark a lot of discussion, participation, and critical insight, but they have not yet found an organizational vehicle to move beyond the one-off event. They represent what Encalada (1979) has called "convocatory" communication - communication which simply "calls people together" but doesn't follow the communication (or in this case learning) experience up with organizing and action. The action that is planned on the Nigerian stage has not yet lead for example to the creation of a farmers' organization to take up the issues on a sustained basis. (In contrast the rehearsal of a struggle in ACPC's case is a concrete planning exercise for a real struggle.) Heightened political consciousness on its own does not create a strong organization nor the conditions for a successful political struggle. As the ACPC case shows, people come to a critical class consciousness in the process of building an organization and struggling for their rights.

The ACPC and IMDEC cultural work is built into an on-going process of education, leadership training, organizing, and struggle. They not only call people together; they also create an organizational framework and a common understanding and purpose in which people can work together. Drama in their case is not the primary mobilizing agent nor the main source of learning; it is drama-within-the-process - one of a number of activities which serve a broader aim of building a popular movement and struggling against oppression. In ACPC's organizing process drama plays a wide range of roles - bringing people together and building solidarity; celebrating important victories and building confidence in popular power; deepening community discussion and understanding of the major issues; voicing protest, poking fun at the landlords, overcoming poeple's fears and stirring their emotions; clarifying the target for a specific struggle and assuring massive support; and planning and agreeing on the strategies for struggle. This wide range of functions, however, is only because of the sustained organizing process and other activities for which drama plays a supportive role.

The ACPC case study also shows how drama can be used to fulfill different needs at different stages of the organizing process - from the initial stage of overcoming fear and the internalized myths to the later stages of organizing support for mass strikes against the landlords or mass confrontations with the authorities to demand that "paper" reforms be implemented. Another important element in the ACPC cultural work is the high level of community participation - ACPC has evolved a dramatic structure in which everyone gets involved, discussing the issues, debating the merits of a specific struggle or its proposed tactics, arguing fiercely with the 'landlord' character, protesting against injustices being portrayed on the stage....in some cases the 'audience' literally take over the drama. As in the Nigerian and Jamaican community theatre work, discussion is woven into the drama rather than being a contrived 'extra' at the end.

Of course this kind of work doesn't go on without a reaction from the dominant class. The Mexican case shows how outside political parties destroyed the unity of the slum-dwellers' organization. In India ACPC and similar organizations face physical violence from the landlords and persecution from the authorities. In Jamaica the women's theatre group (Sistren) and other workers have been laid off the Impact employment programme as one outcome of the stringent conditions of the new IMF loan.

One issue which all of the case studies address is the role of the outside animateur - ie. how to avoid the dominating or paternalistic approach of conventional development work. In IMDEC's work in the barrios of Guadalajara they transformed their role from that of an extension agent providing information and services and making all the initiatives to that of a "back-seat" advisory role, supporting a community-controlled organization. In the Chinese and ACPC programmes the middle-class animateurs live in the villages, have a very modest income, and assume a supportive but not dominating role. In the Indian, Jamaican, Mexican, and Chinese cases there is a deliberate effort to train and hand over initiatives to local leaders.

One interesting aspect of most of the studies is their insights on literacy work. The Chinese and the ACPC programme use drama as a form of recreation and learning in their respective literacy programmes and in the Chinese case the newly produced scripts often served as literacy texts. (Holm, 1980) The Jamaican women's theatre group, many of whom are illiterate, create their own scripts through an improvisation process and once they are taped and transcribed, they become the text for literacy learning. As others have discovered, learning to read one's own words, representing one's deeply felt emotions and experiences, is a powerful incentive for literacy. In the Brazilian case study Bordenave shows in a similar way how the popular cordel poetry inspires many people to learn to read and to continue to read. The folhetos are read, reread and passed among neighbours and friends. It is unfortunate that this informal literacy learning is either unrecognized or its potential is misused. Instead of subsidizing (yet not intervening in) the production of cordel literature as the basis for a literacy infrastructure - an incentive for learning to read and maintaining the literacy skill - the Brazilian national literacy organization (MOBRAL) has attempted to "instrumentalize" this medium for their own purposes, commissioning "functional" readers on agriculture, health, and other topics. As Bordenave shows this latter approach may kill the golden goose - destroying both the popular classes' interest in cordel and their habit of reading cordel. Finally, Johnny and

Richards show that the practice of literacy and numeracy is not necessarily a Western innovation and give examples of a syllabary and a more functional form of computation, challenging the notion that indigenous accounting media are underdeveloped.

Conclusion

Popular theatre then is a totally different approach than folk media. The latter uses the people's channels, the people's "media" but not their ideas - it simply uses the people's mouthpiece as a more persuasive channel for the propaganda of the ruling classes. Popular theatre, on the other hand, is not only the people's voice, it is their ideas and expresses their interests. But more than this it makes people question the deeper structures which shape their situation and the possible outcomes of various courses of action. At best it is built into a process of organization and struggle which leads to structural transformation.

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PEOPLE'S LITERATURE, RURAL WORKERS, AND DOMESTICATION IN BRAZIL[1]

by

Juan Díaz Bordenave

This case study deals with the nature and utilization of a traditional form of people's literature, the folhetos of the Brazilian Northeast, commonly known as Cordel Literature. Beginning with their historical, socio-economic and political context, the paper then describes the folhetos' production, distribution, use by rural workers, and their themes. In the final sections of the paper the author analyzes the ideological content and current instrumentalist uses of the folhetos.

The Brazilian Northeast

The Brazilian Northeast covers an area of more than 750,000 square kilometres (i.e. three times the surface area of West Germany) and has more than 30 million inhabitants. It has three major climatic zones: 1) the Zona da Mata, with its hot climate with two well-defined seasons, one rainy and the other dry; 2) the Sertão, also hot but dry and subject to periodic droughts that kill vegetation, weaken the cattle and force men to migrate; and 3) the Agreste, a transitional zone with parts as humid as in Zona da Mata and others as dry as in the Sertão.

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[1] The author wishes to acknowledge the help of João Bosco Pinto, Armia Escobar, Antonio Fausto Netto and Jean Louis Van Tillburg in gathering material for this paper.

This climatic diversity explains the emergence of the two major systems of agricultural exploitation: sugar cane in Zona da Mata and cattle in the Sertão; in between there is the mixed agriculture of the Agreste.

Historically, the Northeast was the region where Portuguese colonization started in Brazil, in the early 1500s. Initially the Portuguese exploited a tree called pau brasil but sugar-cane rapidly took the leading role as the wealth-producing good. The Portuguese Crown distributed sesmarias and capitanias, large tracts of land, to the colonialists and for many years the initial pattern of land-distribution set the mode of production for the region, largely based on the cultivation of sugar-cane and the production of sugar. The indigenous Indians were difficult to manage as a labour force and so slaves were imported from Africa.

Each engenho (plantation) was a self-sufficient economic unit with a large number of people. Besides the senhor de engenho or master landlord, there were the chaplain, the sugar-master, the banker, the sugar technicians, the head of field production and the white farmers. There were also 50 to 60 slaves. Eventually, many of the landlords and the farmers bought military patents and became colonels, majors, captains, etc., with full authority over the lives and properties of their workers.

The size of the estates and the authority structure established in colonial times characterized the feudal system prevailing in the Brazilian Northeast until the present. Concentration of the land in a few hands, the latifundia system, marks the land tenure pattern in the Northeast. The following table shows clearly the dominance of latifundia: 1.7% of the number of farms occupied, 50% of the total arable land.

Subregion	Minifundia		Latifundia	
	% of number of farms	% of total farm area	% of number of farms	% of total farm area
Mata	90.8	17.0	2.3	55.6
Agreste	96.5	32.1	0.6	47.6
Sertão	80.9	27.3	2.3	45.5
Average	91.4	25.4	1.7	49.6

The people who work the land in the Northeast are either landowners, managers, sharecroppers, renters, hired workers, or a combination of these categories. Some of them work full-time in agriculture, some also have a job or office outside agriculture.

1. Landowners: The Brazilian constitution defends the right of private property; therefore the government cannot confiscate land unless it is declared of public utility by Congress and paid for in cash. Landownership in the Northeast is not only a right protected by the law, but a deeply-rooted value - at least until recently - in the hearts of the rural people. The peasants do not easily accept the breaking of a historically powerful institution such as private property. Leftist organizers face an uphill task in trying to convince the peasants that the land of their patrões (bosses) is theirs (the workers) by justice, that it can be taken by them.

The landowners have tremendous power. Until recently the landlord had the culturally accepted right to punish a worker physically, either himself or through his *capangas* (bodyguards); he had the right to fire any worker any time. He decides whether or not to give small pieces of land to the workers for their subsistence crops and determines what crops are grown by sharecroppers and renters. There are several kinds of landowners:

a) *Usineiros*: These are the owners of *usinas* or sugar factories in the field. These are usually absentee landowners, living in the capital of the state, Rio de Janeiro or São Paulo, and also possessing interests in assorted industries or occupying high political offices.

The *usinas* produce part of the cane they grind, but more often they buy raw material from *fornecedores de cana* (suppliers). Many *usinas* own several *engenhos*, or smaller plantations which formerly produced a non-refined sugar called *bangüê* in primitive sugar-mills. Some of the *usinas* have a truly enormous capacity for sugar production, like Catende, the largest *usina* in Pernambuco, which in the 1955-56 harvest produced 900,277 bags of 80 kilos (132 lbs.) each. The largest *usinas* control a tremendous amount of land, on average 35,000 hectares (more than 70,000 acres).[2]

b) *Senhores de Engenho*: owners of *engenhos* or plantations. Some keep their sugar-production mills active despite the pressure from the *usinas* to buy them out; most, however, have become only cane suppliers, and their mills are inactive.

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[2] There is an increasing tendency for the *usinas* to cultivate their own lands, eliminating the *fornecedores*. They want both the industrial and the agricultural profit. They buy out a large number of *engenhos*, link them with truck and railroads, divide the land into various organizational units and use their own men to direct them.

c) *Proprietarios*: although this is a generic denomination, meaning landowner, in Pernambuco, it is generally applied to the owner of a farm which is not an *engenho* or a *usina*. It may be a small farm devoted to general agriculture.

2. *Sharecroppers and renters*: these are farmers who in general do not own land and therefore work the land of a landowner. There are many ways to pay for the use of the land:

a) *In products*: at the time of harvest, the sharecroppers put aside one third, or one half, of this crop for the landowner. This system is called *parceria* which may be *tercia* (one third) or *meia* (one half) according to the proportion given to the landowner. The men are called *meieiro* or *terceiros*. The *Vaqueiros* take care of the herd and keep a half or a third of the offspring from cows, goats, pigs, etc.

b) *In cash*: In this region the cash rent paid to the landowner is called *foro* and the people who pay it *foreiros*. The amount of the foro is usually established by the landowner.

c) *In personal labor*: a man works at the landowner's operations some days of the week, at a certain rate per day, and works at his own operations the rest of the week. This system is called *sujeição* or *condição* and the men subject to it *conceiros*.

There may be all kinds of combinations of these three payment systems.

In the majority of the cases, a renter owns his work tools and is free to sell the products of his plot to anyone he pleases. He usually takes them to the nearest fair. Economically, the renters are in a better position than the hired workers and legally they have the right to be reimbursed, when they leave, for the improvement they have introduced in the rented land, such as the house, the fences, the cleaned-up cropland, the well and corrals, etc. In general they cannot be expelled by the landowner before the expiration of their contract. The renter can obtain bank credit, for which they need the landowner's approval (the collateral is not the land, but the products). Many renters end up buying some land either from their own patrão or from other landowners.

3. Hired workers: These constitute the majority of the rural workers in the sugar-cane area. According to the degree in which they are tied to the land and the landlord, they can be grouped into three categories: the moradores who reside in the property where they work, the trabalhadores de fora who live in the towns or villages, making up the bulk of their population, and the corumbas catingueiros (migrant labourers) who live in the Agreste or the Sertão but travel every year to the sugar-cane areas during harvest to work in it. (Andrade, 1963)

The moradores are given a place to live if they are single or a house if they are married. Often they are also given a small plot to grow food crops. Coffee and banana are not permitted because, being permanent plants, the morador may ask for compensation when leaving. Frequently the landowner requests a reduction of the workers' plots so he can plant more cane.

The hired worker receives a daily wage for his work at the plantation. Although the government has established a minimum wage, few landowners pay it. Also, the landowners have many ways to pay a lower real wage. In the first place, the workers are not paid in cash, but in vales do barracão, i.e., pieces of paper on which the amount they have earned is written. These vales are only good at the barracão, or small store in which the landowner sells groceries, bread, rum, clothes and medicines. At the barracão prices are generally higher than at regular merchant shops. But the system forces the workers to buy in the landlord's store. Taking advantage of the ignorance of the workers, the bodegueiros (men who run the barracão) write inflated figures on the workers' record of expenditures at the barracão, or on the record of the loans they got from the store. This trick is called engano-de-lapis (pencil's mistake). So the worker is always in debt to the patrão and this debt ties him to the property. If he tries to escape without paying back his debt, the police will surely chase him back. Some workers, who want to move to another engenho but who are in debt, "sell themselves" to the new landowner, i.e., they borrow from him enough money to pay up the previous debt. Punishment for not paying can be drastic: Andrade (1963) reports the case of a morador who was branded with a red hot iron, like a horse, by the indignant landowner.

Another trick used to pay low wages is to use a doctored stick to measure the amount of work done by the workers. Work on the fields is usually measured by contas or a certain number of yards. The stick used to measure the yards in the contas is longer than it should be.

The worker seldom notices the extra size.

The hired workers in general own few or no agricultural tools. They are seldom allowed to raise work animals. Some are forced to sell their own small produce to the barração, at prices set by the patrão. Absolute obedience to the landowner and his cabos (overseers) is required.

The hired workers are generally deprived of access to education. Although according to the law any landowner with more than 100 workers must build a school and pay the salary of a teacher for the workers' children, few comply with the law and even in these cases only a small number of workers' children are able to benefit. Because of their poverty, the workers' children have to start working at a very early age and cannot go to school. This explains the high level of illiteracy (over 50%) among plantation workers.

Introduction to Folhetos

Folhetos (booklets) are a traditional form of people's literature in the Brazilian Northeast, commonly known as Cordel literature.

The name folhetos de cordel applies to small publications, 12 x 16 centimeter[3], written generally in sextilhas or groups of six verses, where each verse usually has seven syllables. Within the sextilha verses are rhymed in the pattern ABCBDB.

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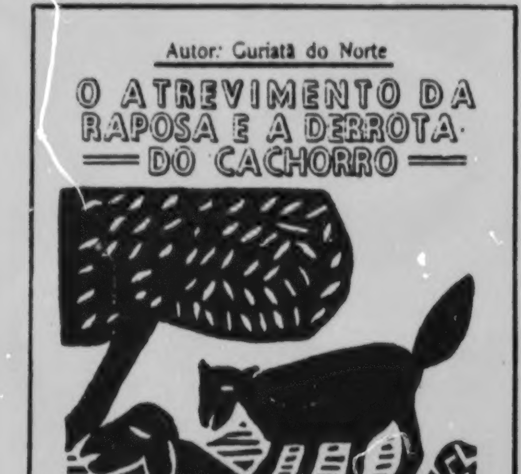
3. Although the word folheto is the generic name for this medium, its true popular name varies with the number of pages. The folheto proper has 8 pages; a romance has 16 or 24 pages; a historia (story) has 32 or 48 pages. The number of pages is an economic imposition of the standard paper-cutting practices.

Cordel, meaning "string", refers to the custom of exposing folhetos for sale hanging from strings.

Folhetos are printed on cheap paper in primitive presses and their cover usually carries a crude block print made by the author himself and representing the main subject of the publication. More recently covers may show a photograph or even a full-colour design, revealing the influence of other media. Renato Campos Carneiro comments:

> "The influence of North American comic strips is considerable to the point that many folhetos have their cover illustrated with pictures of the strips' heroes. Photos of movie stars are also being used, taking the place of the old love postcards so commonly preferred in the old times."


Autor: Guriatã do Norte
O ATREVIMENTO DA RAPOSA E A DERROTA DO CACHORRO
CASA DAS CRIANÇAS DE OLINDA

In the past, folhetos were printed in small quantities by handset type; nowadays some commercial off-set printers produce large quantities of them (200,000 copies or more). Originally only the author's name, address, and the distribution address appeared on the back cover; now advertisements appear in this space. Folhetos are now registered and copyrighted. This became necessary after a number of plagiarizations shocked a previously honest and non-competitive field.

Folhetos are sold regularly at specific points in the main cities of the Northeast, by authorized representatives of the publishers. But they are also sold at the weekly fairs that take place in the rural towns of the Northeastern states of Bahia, Pernambuco, Ceara, and Sergipe. In many cases folhetos are sold by the same men who sell medicinal roots and herbs.

In most cases the folhetos are advertised by the author, who sings the verses, sometimes with the accompaniment of a guitar, occasionally using a loudspeaker [illegible] overcome the noise of the fair. The seller repeats the most exciting parts of the folheto and invites the crowd to buy his product:

> "In some fairs, for example, the folheto salesmen put their products on a straw-mat and start reciting some verses loudly. Passers-by gather and, when the speaker reaches the climax of a story, he stops. After a short pause, he says: 'My friends, should you like to know the rest, buy the folheto. It costs 3 cruzeiros.' " (Araujo, 1971)

The extraordinary thing about all this is that the majority of the purchasers are illiterate. Many of them buy folhetos and take them home, where they ask a son, a daughter or a friend, to read the folheto aloud several times, until they memorize the content. Many know eight or ten folhetos by heart. This massive "uncultured" audience of factory workers, soldiers, daily-paid urban workers, small farmers, cowboys, artisans, and peasants is a much larger market then that for bourgeois literature -

> "the habit of reading folhetos is deeply rooted in the lives of the people of the Northeast. We have seen piles of them in some homes. It is easily perceivable that the folhetos have been perused, read, re-read and frequently passed around among neighbours and friends. Vava and Galdino, the first a farm-worker and the second a fisherman, always buy folhetos but each tries to purchase a different one so that after reading them they can swap them." (Araujo, 1971)

Most folheto writers are able to earn a living from their writing. Nevertheless, the rising cost of living has lately forced some of them to take on other jobs. Many popular poets make extra cruzeiros by appearing in radio and TV shows or by writing folhetos for political or commercial propaganda.

Folhetos' thematic content

Folhetos cover a range of themes[4]:

1. Animal stories or fables

Animals are given human characteristics, virtues and vices. They talk and compete with each other, like the fox and the dog do in the folheto entitled, The daring of the fox and the defeat of the dog, written by Guriatã do Norte.

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[4] These categorizations are based on the classifications made by Araujo (1971), Campos (1959), and Koshiyama (1972).

2. Patrão vs. Poor Worker

In many folhetos, the struggle of the poor knights against the powerful feudal king, which was a favorite subject in the Middle Ages, is replaced by the struggle between the poor sertanejos (cowboys from the Sertão) and the senhores de engenho. Often the brave sertanejo conquers the landlord's daughter, a thing that is totally impossible in reality. The oppressed rural workers channel their social protest into these verses.

At the same time, they reveal the hidden aspiration of the poor to become rich and take the place of the patrao. Thus, the happy ending of most folhetos depicting patrão-worker struggle consists of the latter marrying the former's daughter and taking over his land and wealth. For example, one of these stories goes like this:

> "A rich landlord bets a large sum with his friends that one of his cowboys never lies. To win the bet he asks his daughter to try to seduce the cowboy into killing the Ox Leitão, a prized animal in the landlord's herd.
>
> The cowboy overcomes the strong temptation and tells the truth to the landlord. As a reward he marries the girl and inherits the farm."

3. The shrewd popular character

Most cultures and societies have a shrewd resourceful popular character who steals from the rich and gives to the poor - e.g., Quevedo in Spain, Cartouche in France, Robin Hood in England, Pedro Malasartes and Comões in Portugal, etc. Many folhetos deal with a similar character - an underdog who wins more by ingenuity and bluff than exertion of power. One such character in many folhetos is João Grilo, described as a plantation labourer, always skinny and hungry but proud and intelligent. One of the folhetos, "The Deeds of João Grilo", by popular poet João Jose Silva, is considered the "king of the folhetos" for having sold more than 100,000 copies. Its popularity is due,

> "not only to the hero's physical resemblance to the plantation workers, but also to the success of his adventures, conquering all obstacles and fooling the powerful. Another [reason] is that the plantation or mill workers prefer stories about sugar workers to those of brave *sertanejos* (cowboys). They have been conditioned for generations to accept their subordination to the landowners and don't believe that the stories in the folhetos about 'courageous sertanejos' insulting the landlords, getting around their strongmen, marrying their daughters, by force and fearlessness, could ever happen." (Campos, 1959)

They identify more easily with João Grilo, a sugar worker like themselves who wins by shrewdness, rather than force. When he wins, they win: "they have lived and felt psychologically the hero's success." (Campos, 1959)

4. Religion and morality

The people of the Northeast are deeply, if superstitiously, religious. Many folhetos deal with morality or with historical religious figures such as Father Cicero of Crato who defended the poor against injustice or Frei Damião who prophesied punishment for those who led sinful lives. The devil also appears in some folhetos.

5. Social criticism

Although folhetos never criticize society from the point of view of its structure (Fausto Netto, 1977) they frequently comment, analyze or criticize the social evils as perceived by the popular poets.

Examples of social issues dealt with in folhetos are: the high cost of living; the divorce law; the working conditions of taxi drivers; the Government decree on political amnesty; the ecological destruction of the Amazon Region due to multi-national companies; Brazil's situation and the student revolt; the expulsion of settlers by real estate companies.

6. Banditry and violence

The Northeast of Brazil is a region with a history of violence, and certainly in the past banditry and repression caused much bloodshed. Antonio Silvino, better known as Lampião, is the most famous of these bandits; stories about his exploits, of taking from the rich and giving to the poor, recorded in folhetos, have reached mythical proportions. Besides Lampião, however, many other smaller Pancho Villa types acquired legendary status and deserved to have their names entered in cordel literature.

7. General events

Insofar as illiterates do not read newspapers, and poor people do not own radio sets, folhetos have become for many inhabitants of the Northeast the only source of information on general events happening outside the limits of the rural villages and towns. It is through folhetos sung in the weekly fairs that the peasants get to know about the first man on the moon; the death of former President Kubitshchek in a car accident; the construction of Brasilia, the new capital city of Brazil; the scandal involving a regional politician who tried to bribe an industrialist; the assassination of two taxi drivers by three thieves, etc.

8. Challenges and counterpoint

As in other parts of the world, the rural people of the Northeast celebrate and admire a singer who can hold his own when singing face to face with another singer, in a duel of incredible intellectual and poetic skill called desafio (challenge) or peleja (fight). The challenge usually starts with each singer boasting about his unbeatable talent and power of imagination. The most fantastic metaphors are freely used for this boasting:

"Eu já suspendi um raio	I stopped a lightning once
e fiz o vento para	and made wind come to a stop -
Já fiz estrela correr	I made a star start running
Já fiz o sol esfriar	and made the sun become cold.
Já segurei uma onça	I held once a tiger tight
para um moleque mamar..."	so that a child could suck milk.

(Josué Romano, famous minstrel of old times)

Another poet, Preto Azulão, boasted that:

"Quando me faltá repente	When I lack a good reply
Falta a tubarão no má,	The sea has sharks no longer.
Falta padre nas igreja	There are no priests at the churches.
Falta santo nos altá,	There are no saints at the altars.
Falta frade nos convento	The convents don't have monks
e seca no Ceará."	and Ceará has no more droughts.

Frequently the challenger presents a question to the other singer, who must respond singing in verse (Campos, 1959). Example:

Challenger -

Eu também sou preparado	I am also well prepared,
conheço a filosofia,	I know my philosophy,
vou fazer-lhe uma pergunta	a question I'm going to make
se acaso tem teoria	if you do have theory,
responda ao som da viola,	respond sounding your guitar
o que é mitologia".	what is mythology.

Response -

São os contos fabulosos	It is those fabulous stories
dos deuses da antiguidade,	of the gods of antiquity,
dos tempos do paganismo	of the time of paganism

fala de toda entidade	it tells of all entities
originario do grego,	originating in Greece
nasceu uma primeira idade.	having their birth in old ages.
Challenger -	
Tua resposta me agrada	I am pleased with your answer,
quem sabe não se embaraça,	who knows is not to be ashamed,
se acaso me dá licença	if you give me your permission
que outra pergunta lhe faça,	I'll give you another question:
por obséquio me diga	Would you be so kind to tell me
quem foi a deusa da caça?	who was the hunters' own goddess?
Response -	
Eu sei que a sua pergunta	I know that your interrogation
não é para soltar chicana,	is not to ask foolish questions
por isso vou responder-lhe	and thus I'm willing to answer
se o espírito não me engana	if the spirit does not fool me:
é uma irmã de Apolo	it is god Apollo's sister
tem o nome de Diana.	and Diana is her name.

9. Stories of Imagination and Fantasy

The lives of peasants in the North East are far from easy and pleasant. They work hard, they are poor, they are frequently and chronically hungry, they are exploited and oppressed, they have no reason to be hopeful of a better future. Because of this situation, they often seek comfort in escapist fantasies. Folhetos satisfy this deeply felt need for impossible stories which sublimate the everyday frustrations of millions of people limited by climate and the social system to a precarious struggle for survival.

The need for fantasy explains, for instance, the tremendous success of the folheto, O Pavão Misterioso (The Mysterious Peacock), which is about two brothers who inherit their father's wealth. One uses his inheritance prudently but the other spends the money in mad adventures. One of his wild ideas is to build a sort of airplane, in the form of a peacock, to fly above hills and rivers. Eventually he falls in love with the daughter of a rich lord who owns a castle where he imprisons his daughter. With the help of his "mysterious peacock" the young man elopes with the girl and they live happily ever after.

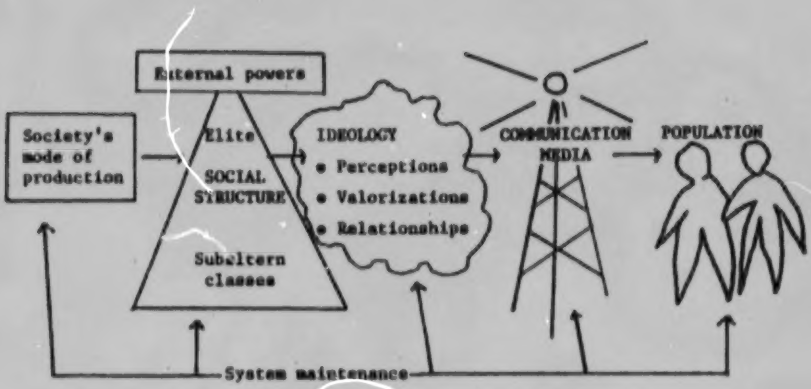
Who would think that this story is the plot of the best-seller among all the folhetos in Brazil!

Folhetos: An Instrument of Liberation or of Domestication?

This review of folheto themes shows that this is a powerful communication medium, reaching out to large numbers of people with information, entertainment, and an aesthetic experience. The folheto is both the newspaper and novel of the rural worker. It is more than news or information - it conveys "stories which break the loneliness of the rural worker, helping him at the same time to stand up to his present misery through a projection mechanism which identifies him with the hero of the narrative." (Campos, 1959)

But what is the over-all effect of this medium? Its audience is clearly the popular classes but does it serve their interests? Does it express protest and popular aspirations for liberation or does it contribute to the maintenance of the dominant ideology, reinforcing the structures of oppression? This question will be addressed in this section.

Diaz Bordenave (1979) has popularized in his writings a simplistic representation of the relationship existing among communication media, social structure, ideology and system maintenance:


External powers
Society's mode of production
Elite
SOCIAL STRUCTURE
Subaltern classes
IDEOLOGY
• Perceptions
• Valorizations
• Relationships
COMMUNICATION MEDIA
POPULATION
System maintenance

The scheme says the following:

(1) A given society may have a mode of production based on private property (capitalism), state property (communism) or communitary property (various socialist schemes).

(2) The mode of production adopted by society determines the formation, through history, of a given social structure. Generally, this social structure consists of a small ruling "elite", a relatively large middle stratum and a very numerous popular mass in the lower stratum. The criteria to constitute the elite vary according to the system: in a feudal or capitalist system, elite membership is based on family, wealth, land ownership, etc.; in other systems one belongs to the elite for reasons of political power. But all systems have a stratification mechanism.

(3) In developing countries, above the national elite we still have the foreign groups which impose their desires, interests, values

and strategies on their national partners and, through them, to the rest of the population.

(4) In any case, the elite is considered, within its own system, the goal to which all the other strata dream to arrive. The lower strata make efforts to identify themselves with the elite, adopting their ways of perceiving the world and the good life, of valuing things and persons, and of relating themselves to others. We will call this set of perceptions, values and relationships, "ideology". This ideology is, then, a product of the social structure historically established, which it legitimates and defends because this ideology originates in the dominant elites.

(5) In order to survive and prosper within the system, the communication media must act as vehicles of this ideology. Content analysis of newspapers and magazines, comic stories, TV soap operas, photo novels, advertisements, etc., will quickly reveal the perceptions, values and relations that these media present as desirable and legitimate to the population.

(6) The consumer population does not perceive that, together with the substantive message content (news, technical information, entertainment, etc.), it is also absorbing the ideology of the dominant elites. The lower strata in all naivete internalizes beliefs and values, even those antagonistic to their own interests.

(7) Consequently, the population acquires a "mentality" and behavioural habits which contribute to the consolidation and perpetuation of

the mercenary media, of the dominant ideology, of the social structure dominated by the elites, and of the production mode which generated everything else. This is what we may call "communication at the service of system maintenance" and it consists of a vicious circle that only the development of critical consciousness in the masses of the population can eventually break.

We may say that folhetos should not be an exception to this general pattern and ask to what extent they contribute to the internalization of the ideology of the dominant classes in the Northeast. Fausto Netto (1977) made this analysis of the ideological content of folhetos:

> "Cordel literature, although in fact a cultural practice produced at the level of the dominated segments of society, is a cultural production permeated by aspects of the dominant culture. In the final analysis, the discursive power of the dominant culture plays a fundamental role in the definition, organization and hierarchization of the marginalized people's symbolic practices. In other words, cordel literature, although a text of the subordinate classes, is subjected to the circumstances and communication possibilities existing in class society. This means that, in a socially differentiated society, certain laws are at work whose hidden influence is exerted through the violence applied to the symbolic work with the purpose of covering up true reality."

The mechanisms employed by folhetos to distort and cover up true reality, called by Fausto Netto "the cultural practice of symbolic domination", are quite complex and multiform. The following typology of mechanisms for handling discourse, articulated in two "plans", was proposed by Fausto Netto based on content analysis of numerous folhetos:

A - CONTINUITY PLAN

The goal of the continuity plan is to assimilate the struggle of the dominated classes, their criteria for value judgments, etc., to the normative framework of the dominant structure, thus neutralizing the emergence of genuine representations of the subaltern classes:

> "Such resource supports the illusion of integration among individuals through the establishment of universal and atemporal categories whose concepts never appear loaded with a given intentionality."

The following code mechanisms are utilized to implement the continuity plan:

Mechanism 1 - Individualization

The survival strategies of the subaltern classes are represented by actions and situations individualized and not collectivized. Social representations focus attention on the deeds of one given person, a "character".

Mechanism 2 - Decontextualization

The individualization of actions and situations removes the social phenomena from their context in the real social structure. Facts are seen in isolation, separated from the social setting in which they are normally generated.

Mechanism 3 - Valorative designation

Because of the two previous mechanisms, actions and situations do not have a social referential context with which to be judged and valued and, therefore a moralistic criterion is applied to them. The agents of action are ordered and evaluated according to an abstract ideal scheme with the consequence that the problems involving the subaltern classes are perceived as natural, without socio-historical causes attributed to them.

Mechanism 4 - Naturalization

As a result of the mechanisms of individualization, decontextualization and valorative designation, the dynamics of reality are explained through the appeal to myths, such as luck or fate or through the intervention of supernatural entities.

Mechanism 5 - Ambiguity

Because the contextual social structure and order are not considered, the dominated classes and persons are ambiguously characterized in cordel literature. A bandit such as Lampião appears as a criminal in one folheto and as a champion of the people in another. A rebellious worker is presented at the same time as a courageous little man and as a violator of the sacred laws of authority and private property.

Therefore, the ambiguity mechanism pervades all previous mechanisms and its consequence is the perpetuation of the normative criteria and values of the dominant class.

B - SUBSTITUTION PLAN

The goal of the substitution plan is to cover up the contradictions and conflicts inherent in a stratified social system, through explaining them in a distorted form, with the help of the following mechanisms:

Mechanism 6 - Substitution of the moral order for the social order

Insofar as the moral order is defined by the elites and by tradition, it provides a safer explanatory channel than the social order. Thus one can forgive the paternalistic landlord the fact that he owns all the land in the region and can uphold his right to command hard labor from its workers because discipline and work are traditional moral values.

Mechanism 7 - Substitution of the consequences for the causes

The substitution of the moral order for the social order as an explanatory device makes it possible to interpret the causes of oppression in terms of the deficiencies and shortcomings of the oppressed themselves. Their poverty and misery are thus interpreted as the cause for the inferior situation in which they find themselves. The causes are explained by what would be the consequences.

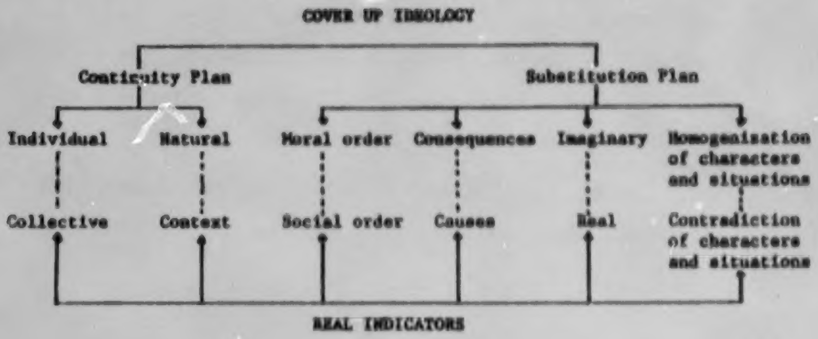
Mechanism 8 - Substitution of the imaginary for the real

The low explanatory power of the moral order, and of the consequences of the problems, forces cordel literature to appeal to imaginary solutions. The contradiction between opposite social groups, for example, is solved by locating the conflict in heaven or in hell, as metaphors for the outcome of the conflict.

Mechanism 9 - Substitution of harmony for antagonism

Situations in which the contradictory positions of the characters are based on their antagonistic situation in the social structure are mediated by appealing to the affective or "Christian" sentiments of the people, while in reality the contradictions are structural and not personal. In this way actions, situations and positions of actors who live in opposed camps are homogenized and neutralized.

A graphic synthesis of the cover up ideology was proposed by Fausto Netto:


COVER UP IDEOLOGY
Continuity Plan
Substitution Plan
Individual
Natural
Moral order
Consequences
Imaginary
Homogenization of characters and situations
Collective
Context
Social order
Causes
Real
Contradiction of characters and situations
REAL INDICATORS

In order to test this theoretical framework, Fausto Netto analyzed a corpus of folhetos in regard to four dimensions of the dominated classes' struggle for survival, namely:

a) characterization of the excluded sector (the dominated classes);

b) the work processes for survival;

c) the collective struggle (social movements) for survival;

d) the struggle for justice and liberation from deprivation and misery.

The analysis confirmed his hypotheses and Fausto Netto concluded that,

> "The discourse of cordel literature consists of a description of society built upon a logic which purports to act as an explanatory system of reality but whose fundamental characteristic is the resistance it opposes to the revelation of the true meaning of that reality. As a result, a distance is established between the reality and the narrative offered in place of reality."

The discourse of cordel literature becomes therefore, "a system of rationalization, built upon reality only to get away from it."

This seems to be one more case of the dominated classes internalising the ideology of the dominant classes, so deeply and widely, that a cultural product that appears so spontaneous a channel for the expression of protest and revolt turns out to be an important support for the established order.

Let us now move to the analysis of another important question: to what extent folhetos may serve as an instrument for non-formal education and development?

The instrumental use of folhetos

The hidden instrumentality of cordel literature, as revealed by Fausto Netto, is currently giving way to an explicit instrumentality practiced on behalf of education and mass persuasion for development. Popular poets who in the past wrote what they felt inspired to write, today are being paid by all kinds of agencies and individuals interested in conveying messages promoting the adoption of ideas and behaviors of different types.

The instrumental use of folhetos is not totally new. Back in 1962, Francisco Julião, the leader of the Peasant Leagues, discovered the potential of folhetos for peasant political awareness and indoctrination. He wrote:

> "Looking in those first years for the most effective medium to diffuse the idea of the Leagues within the peasant masses, we tried the communication and participation potential of popular poetry. We sensed at the start, by a quick analysis of the different themes, that, in spite of that literature not including political content, it did contain a strong ideological character. Indeed, almost all of the themes employed are based on the struggle of the weak against the powerful, of the poor against the rich, of the workers against the land-owners.
>
> In summary, ... the folhetinista and the cantador (singer) are notable cultural elements thanks to their closeness and permanent

> contact with the rural masses. Because of this, we did not hesitate to use them for the work of the Peasant Leagues. With the help of these professionals we broke the fence, the isolation, the silence built around us by the press."

It is noticeable that Francisco JuliÃo was not aware of the hidden ideological conservatism of folhetos. In that sense it would be interesting to know what would be Francisco JuliÃo's reaction in regard to the instrumental use to which folhetos are being put today.

"Didactic" folhetos have been produced on the subjects of,

- crop production and animal husbandry (MOBRAL);
- the rights of sharecroppers (Federation of Social and Educational Assistance Organizations);
- the encyclical of Pope Paul IV and the lives of saints and missionaries;
- the deteriorating situation of the Potiguara Indians in Paraiba State, North-East Brazil (Pastoral for the Indians of the Archdiocese of Paraiba);
- co-operative organization (Association for the Orientation of co-operatives of the North-East)

Folhetos are also used by some political parties. All of these groups take advantage of the well-known folheto format and assume that the readers will transfer the prestige of the popular and more spontaneous folhetos to the more instrumentalized ones.

The instrumental use of folk media has been approved and recommended by writers like Everett Rogers and Henry Ingle:

> "The traditional media have a great potential in achieving development goals because they have a wide audience and high credibility in the eyes of the villagers." (Rogers, 1977)

> "Highlighting what is known from many communication studies - that is, that in order to convey a message with effect, one has to use the language, symbols and styles familiar to the audience - the use of folk puppetry, opera, comedy and the shadow puppet play are cited as trusted sources for conveying new ideas to people who are illiterate and unfamiliar with the process of perceiving and interpreting symbols and messages from other types of media." (Ingle, 1974)

For this writer, however, the instrumental use of folhetos is a dangerous and shortsighted instance of developmentalist pragmatism:

> "I see in this discovery a lot of good, a lot of evil. The good is that the folk media are legitimate possessions of the people, an intrinsic part of their culture, and so, they have the right to be respected, supported and used. However, and this is the evil part, the development thinkers' obsession with goal achievement and not with human growth may take up these folk media as another set of instruments for changing people's way of thinking, feeling and behaving. And this is not the purpose and the function of the traditional communication media! Their purpose is expression, relationship, communion, escape, fantasy, beauty, poetry, worship. Never persuasion of people to vaccinate, to implant IUD's, to fight parasites or to eat vegetables.
>
> I am afraid that as soon as people realize that their folk songs, poems and art are being used for subliminal propaganda, they will let them die. Of course the contemporary forms of folk media must reflect the new preoccupations of a people in movement toward development. New dreams and anxieties will appear naturally in the songs and poems of the masses. But to use those channels for an instrumental function of persuasion, in my view, is cultural genocide and should never be included in development communication projects." (Díaz Bordenave, 1975)

General conclusions

The material analyzed leads to two important conclusions in regard to cordel literature:

1. Despite their traditional and popular origin, through a number of symbolic mechanisms, folhetos exert pressure for consensus and acceptance of the present social structure and the dominance of the higher classes over peasants and workers. This happens despite folhetos being frequently vehicles of specific complaints on social injustice and people's exploitation.
2. The multiple social functions of folhetos as a popular communication medium include information, entertainment, aesthetic and artistic enjoyment, but does not include deliberate persuasion and instruction for the adoption of utilitarian practices. In other words, the medium simply was not created and maintained for pragmatic ends.

These two conclusions put us in a serious dilemma: Should folhetos be used in non-formal education or not?

This author thinks that folhetos may be used in non-formal education but should not be written for this purpose. Their content should be read and analyzed in group discussion by the "students" so that they have a corpus of material that, well analyzed, could lead them to understand the problems of their society, as well as the influence of the dominant ideology on the maintenance of the status quo. Folhetos can then be tools of conscientization. But they should not be deliberately written by external agencies for conscientization purposes. The agencies should use other methods for this goal, leaving the writing of spontaneous folhetos to the popular poets, letting them decide whether or not to use their art to make people aware of their life conditions and situation. The poets should continue doing what they have always done: to reflect what their people think and feel in a moment of time as well as to dream their prophetic and often utopic dreams. They should not be turned into propagandists or teachers.

Popular poets should never be hired to write folhetos with intentionally persuasive messages. They should, however, be made aware of the ideology and the values they are spreading which may be serious obstacles for the profound socio-structural and cultural changes needed by their society. (Azcueta, 1978).

It is our task as professionals and citizens to change society through political, social and technological means so that a new generation of poets will be eventually born that will sing a new song of liberation and justice for their people.

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PLAYING WITH FACTS

THE ARTICULATION OF "ALTERNATIVE" VIEWPOINTS IN AFRICAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

by

Michael Johnny and Paul Richards

The old man is resting in his hammock after spending the day harvesting rice. We wish to ask him some questions. The sheet of paper on the clipboard is headed 'Rural Needs Evaluation Survey' and lists five 'improvements' designed to contribute to breaking the poverty cycle in rural Sierra Leone. What would be his *order of preference*, assuming funds are restricted, and immediate help is possible with only one of the following: roads, water supply, health centre, primary school and electrification. Yes, he will co-operate; but first he wants to set us a question - if he offered to build us a house, would we choose the walls or the roof?

The answer is like a bucket of cold water - awakening us to an appreciation that his lived-in world is all of a piece; that a 'sectional' approach may be worse than nothing; and that we think in these fragmented terms only because his problems are external, and indeed peripheral, to our own lives.

A Farmers Training Centre in northern Sierra Leone is host to about a hundred farmers undergoing a two-week course in the techniques appropriate to a World-Bank agricultural development scheme they have just joined. The scheme advances credit to develop cultivation of swamp rice under simple irrigation conditions. The farmers are learning how to lay out their swamps and organise the necessary water control. The previous night pupils from the local secondary school had visited the centre and performed their end-of-term play. In the morning a group of farmers approach the principal of the Centre and asked to use the assembly hall for a similar show. Rehearsals have taken up the whole day and now amid mounting excitement, with the generator grumbling healthily in the background, the show is about to begin.

The first piece is a short play composed especially for the occasion. It concerns a farmer falling into ever-deepening impoverishment because he has to borrow to feed his family during the pre-harvest hungry season. The local money lender demands ten bushels of rice back for every bushel advanced. Not surprisingly the poor farmer cannot sustain this rate of repayment for long and he is dragged, protesting, in front of the village chief. Every time a shaft of satire strikes home appreciative members of the audience step up to rattle 10c. pieces into a strategically located bucket, stage left. As accusation and counter accusation fly thick and fast in the final scene in the chief's court room the dialogue has to fight its way above the rattle of coins into the bucket. At last all is resolved by the chief advising the impoverished farmer to seek a better source of credit - namely a loan from the World Bank scheme. The curtain is rung down to a general chorus of praise in the name of the International Development Association (the World Bank department funding the project).

So far the performance is commendable, but hardly the stuff from which

Brechtian enlightenment is forged. Two or three song-and-dance numbers follow and keep the audience happy. These are well-known pieces and the quality and panache of their execution serve to establish the point that what schoolchildren do well, farmers do better.

The 'competitive' edge to the whole evening then suddenly comes into focus in a wickedly executed sketch entitled 'Village Schoolmaster'. Eight of the largest, fittest, most un-primary-school-like farmers on the course have been cast as primary school pupils, looking outrageously overgrown in tiny shirts, shorts and school caps. The schoolmaster, half their size struts in, attired in gumboots, and baggy 'District Officer' trousers, his face half hidden beneath that ikon of colonial rule, a pith helmet. It is at least two sizes too big for him. We are left in no doubt that he is not its original owner. The register is called amidst much militaristic leaping to attention, saluting and abrupt sitting down. The day's first lesson begins. 'Stand up those boys who have not paid their school fees'. Three reluctant pupils stumble to their feet and money changes hands. The thought of the beer this money will buy begins to dominate the schoolmaster's mind. Now he needs some work to occupy his pupils while he slips out for an hour or so to the nearest bar. A meaningless alphabet song 'A na A na leta A; B na B na leta B',.....soon breaks down. Something with more intellectual bite is needed. A philosophical problem, 'What is geography?', suggests itself. Answers attempted vary from blank silence to 'geography is geography'. Impatiently, schoolmaster decides to answer his own question. But in his frustration he can no longer disguise the real point of the exercise, and upwelling from his subconscious comes the solution 'geography is....a bottle of Heineken lager beer'. Waves of comprehension and appreciation well up from all parts of the hall, as a delighted audience calls for more.

The 'Village Schoolmaster' sketch is especially significant in the context of rural northern Sierra Leone because it directly confronts a major contradiction in the development programme the farmers are participating in. The programme requires farmers to hire labour to develop their swamp farms. The group most likely to provide the necessary labour - males in the age range 15 - 39 - is badly depleted by outmigration to the cities and diamond mining areas. Instead of the expected rough equivalence of males and females some chiefdoms in the project area have less than 50 males for every 100 females in the young adult ranges. School education facilitates this movement of young males out of farming, and because the rewards in the Sierra Leone economy are distributed in favour of those participating in the mining sector or trade rather than in farming, parents continue to reinvest profits from farming in their children's education. The contradiction of the agricultural sector of the economy surviving and 'developing' in order to exploit itself is brought out by the actors ambivalent portrayal of education as being a route to some kind of 'success' (even if only the success of a man who derives status from the cast-off clothing of departed colonial officials and from drinking himself to oblivion on bottled beer) while in itself lacking intrinsic value. The alphabet song reminds us that the content of education may be meaningless but that its practice is powerful as ritual.

What are the arguments for the farmers themselves participating in a programme of agricultural education?

The established paradigm to account for rural underdevelopment in Africa focuses attention on low agricultural output. This in turn stems from a series of problems which are 'located' within the rural community itself. These problems can be grouped under three headings:

i) inadequate technology - low-yielding 'unimproved' seed varieties; soil impoverishment due to shifting cultivation and lack of fertiliser; and inadequate implements, storage facilities and processing equipment are often-cited reasons for the failure of 'traditional' agriculture to produce marketable surpluses.

ii) inadequate rural infrastructure - poor roads; ill-health (and a poor labour input record) stemming from polluted water supplies; poorly-developed market networks; and inadequate health and education facilities, are seen to be major factors in the maintenance of vicious cycles of poverty. Thus for example an unhealthy farmer is not able to cultivate the additional land necessary to secure the profit which will pay for facilities such as wells and dispensaries to make him more healthy and therefore more productive.

iii) insufficient commercialisation - farmers indebted to village money lenders; the failure of money to 'penetrate' important sectors within the local economy; non-existent insurance arrangements; and the inability of farmers to raise loans against the security of their land due to 'communal' land-tenure arrangements, are prominent in the list of commercial and institutional factors cited to explain lack of agricultural progress.

The conventional rural development planning paradigm then goes on to argue that the absence of these features deemed necessary for agricultural development results from the isolated, introverted nature of rural communities in Africa. Minds are supposed closed and belief-systems 'pre-scientific' owing to lack of contact with the 'outside world'. 'Traditionalism' is equated with 'subsistence mentality' and both stem from the physical isolation of the communities concerned. Agriculture experiences no progress until modern ideas and technological innovations begin to penetrate the rural periphery. Infrastructural improvements, especially the building of farm access roads; an 'improved technology' input delivery system (as in the World Bank rural development projects in Sierra Leone); and vigorous farmer training and extension programmes are seen as ways of speeding up this process of diffusion of 'modernization' into remote, 'backward', regions. This, then explains the present participation in an agricultural training course of the farmers described above.

A different interpretation of agricultural underdevelopment is possible in which it is argued the problem cannot be traced back to deficiencies in farmers' knowledge. The failure to innovate is not so much a question of knowledge as of opportunity and the factors which control opportunity are rarely if at all internal to the village, nor are they within the farmers' power to control. Local patterns of behaviour are conditioned by national and international economic structures. Throughout Africa the colonial period saw the creation of economies biased towards international trade, in either tropical agricultural produce or in minerals. Many independent African governments continue to find it easier to maintain themselves by taxing international trade rather than attempting to transform the production process, especially agricultural production. This expresses itself in the form of policies which continue to promote urbanization and trade. As part of this process, rural areas lose population by outmigration. Local 'subsistence' systems are then in the position of having supported the reproduction of a labour force for international mining and trading interests without any prospect of meeting their own labour input requirements, except through the intensification of exploitation of women and widespread ecological abuse. From this point of view it is possible to hypothesise that the marked 'traditionalism' of many contemporary African villages is not a product of isolation but of the over-strong relationship between the village as a supplier, and multi-national company-dominated trading and mining interests, as employers of cheap labour. Northern Sierra Leone is, according to the 'diffusion of modernization' model an area of archetypical rural 'backwardness'. The evidence for the nineteenth century calls this interpretation into question. The importance of long-distance trade and the production of rice surpluses to support both people engaged in this trade and the population of the Sierra Leone Colony (in effect Freetown), suggests that 'commercialization' of the *forces* of agricultural production and market orientation were as well developed, if not more so, than at the present day. Perhaps the current 'backward', inward-looking, subsistence-dominated, agriculture of many parts of the region is a recent phenomenon? 'Traditional' society may be a creation of modern circumstances rather than an ethnographic residual.

We wish to comment upon these two polarised interpretations of the rural underdevelopment problem (and on their policy implications) by means of a dialectic in which the antithesis has been provided by individuals and groups within rural Sierra Leone and conveyed via 'folk media'. Our argument is that such a dialectic is essential to 'demystify' the information-gathering process which contributes to decisions in rural development planning. The ideas, attitudes and information projected through 'folk media' provide a necessary challenge to the thesis of social-science positivism, represented by questionnaire schedules designed to elicit numerical or attitudinal 'facts'. The synthesis to emerge at the end of this process is a new and effective understanding of the way in which 'facts' are 'produced' by social processes. 'Underdevelopment' is redefined as a process in which the 'science idiom' helps legitimate new relationships between theory and praxis biased against the long-term interests of the rural poor. It is perhaps important to emphasise the the 'folk media' inputs to the dialectic we are about to describe do not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the 'rural poor' as such. Indeed there is good reason to suppose that considered by themselves the antithetical remarks could be judged to embody much of the 'false consciousness' fostered by dominant power elites within the 'traditional' sector. We question the validity of the 'alternative positivism' of so-called 'ethnoscience' (and in so doing reject some of the assumptions of our own earlier work, see Richards, 1975). What is important is that the challenges issued to social survey positivism through 'folk media' enable both defenders of thesis and antithesis to apprehend the social context of knowledge more clearly, and to break out of the pre-critical slumber in which both sides pursue destructive courses of action unaware that their ideas continue to legitimate the reproduction of inherently unstable and unjust social orders.

We proceed by taking four theses derived from current rural development planning practice in Sierra Leone (or from the social science orthodoxy which underpins this practice). Folk-media resources (e.g. proverbs) are brought into play in the course of constructing antitheses which encapsulate local perspectives.

Thesis 1: It is to the farmer's benefit to participate in the modern, market-oriented sector of agriculture.

In conversation, one farmer was asked what he thought of the new agricultural development schemes sponsored by the World Bank and Ministry of Agriculture. His answer was in the form of a proverb to the effect that:

> 'If you see an intelligent man running in broad daylight through

his rice field, when it is ready for harvest, destroying everything in his path, he is either chasing something or is himself being chased' (Table 1), i.e. These attempts cannot be for the good of the farming population; planners take an interest in farming either because they have to (due to national food shortages) or because they want to exploit rural communities. This comment was followed up with the sharp reminder that all previous requests made from the village for outside help with farming had been turned down.

Another farmer was asked since the country has a food shortage problem due to the increase in the non-farming population why did he not expand his production so that he would have more to sell. The answer, again in the form of a proverb challenged the assumption in the question that the growth of the non-farming population was somehow an independent variable unconnected to agricultural 'underdevelopment' - that the urban population was only a problem insofar as it represented a missed opportunity for the farmer.

'A hill which does not want people to step on it must never allow edible mushrooms to grow on it.'

In short, if people do not want food shortages they should not desert farming.

The same theme was emphasised by the farmer who, when taxed with the question why did he not cultivate a larger farm, retorted that 'the monkey is not stupid for producing one child at a time - it has no grandmother to help it'.

It may be beneficial to produce for an expanding market but if that market is made up of individuals who would have otherwise constituted the family labour force the aim of a greater output may not be possible or realistic. This is an argument that cuts two ways. Repression and exploitation of young people within the 'traditional' household economy under what has been termed the 'lineage mode of production' acts as a 'push' factor to migration when a market for labour begins to emerge in the mining and urban sectors. Exploitation by multi-national capital may have points in its favour when compared to traditional controls by heads of households over the labour and marriage prospects of cadets.

Perhaps the main danger, however, is that of being stranded halfway between 'dynamic' cash-cropping and the self-sufficiency of subsistence agriculture, having the worst of both worlds. In rejecting the idea of using modern agricultural inputs one farmer pithily remarked that he wouldn't increase the size of his calf by plastering it with mud.

Thesis 2: Farmers are isolated and inward-looking, and need to be made more aware of the possibilities available for agricultural improvement.

Surveys were carried out during fieldwork to find out what villagers knew about a variety of Sierra Leonean agricultural development projects, and how well the aims of these projects were understood. Our initial expectation was that knowledge of projects would fall off sharply beyond a radius of 20 - 30 km, especially in those villages where there were few adopters of improved cultivation practices. In two villages studied in Kpa-Mende country there is an almost complete absence of formal extension work and a 100% adherence to traditional shifting cultivation methods of upland rice cultivation; yet awareness of and accurate assessment of the aims of even remote projects (beyond 100 km) is widespread, and in some cases nearly universal.

The same level of general awareness concerning agricultural development projects and their aims and objectives is found in the case of farmers within the territory covered by the World Bank Northern Area scheme. Farmers were asked about 8 projects (3 more than 100 km distant). Knowledge levels were high and little difference was apparent between project participants and farmers outside the scheme. Women farmers not participating in this scheme are as aware of project aims as male farmers registered with the project. The results indicate broad familiarity with the innovations being introduced and their advantages. Several farmers were provoked by our questions into vigorous affirmation of the point that adoption was a matter of opportunity rather than information.

Awareness of and interest in innovation was most marked in the case of rice seed. This is an issue on which everyone is happy to talk at length. In each village there are of the order of 15 - 30 local rice varieties (including some surviving varieties of the indigenous red-skinned Oryza glabberima) and two or three introduced 'improved' strains. Knowledge of ROK 2, ROK 3 and LAC 23, the varieties distributed by the Northern Area project, was extensive among farmers not registered to the project. It is a farmer's business to be informed about rice varieties and we found that there was little or no tendency to specialization and secrecy in this field. On the contrary farmers make a practice of sharing relevant information and actual seed. Realistic ideas are widely held concerning the processes whereby indigenous varieties are diffused. Apart from human agency - deliberate sharing of interesting seed from village to village - it is surmised that 'accidental' introductions may have been transmitted via bird and elephant droppings. Information on source areas for particular varieties is surprisingly detailed - even when the region of origin is far distant. Farmers are generally aware that the choice among indigenous varieties is tending to diminish as many of the less attractive types of rice become locally extinct. This is a matter for their concern, and some villagers are already experimenting with the notion of 'conservation' of interesting planting material. In other cases it is readily conceded that a variety not now grown locally may have a new relevance if climatic or soil fertility conditions change (e.g. in a year of bad drought, or a village with pressing soil erosion problems). Where this situation arises groups of farmers may organise their own 'plant collection' expedition (villages are often known by the varieties of rice they possess and some farmers interviewed could state the nearest locality where it was still possible to collect or buy seed for a variety no longer grown in their own village).

Knowledge of indigenous rice varieties, where they can be located and their responsiveness to different soil and climatic conditions, together with a commitment to collate and disseminate information on an interhousehold, inter-village basis, is for us an important folk-medium deserving the label 'indigenous extension network'. Its value is often recognised by professional 'scientific' plant-exploration teams (a recent plant exploration exercise in Sierra Leone has identified 326 distinct rice varieties). In the terms of the present dialectic the existence of the 'indigenous extension network' calls into question the assumption that agricultural underdevelopment stems from not being well-connected to appropriate information dissemination media capable of transcending village localism. A major weakness of 'indigenous extension' is the tendency for some plant variety names to be highly localized. Nevertheless the meaning of these names, and the question of which groups within a village 'own' which name, if, as is sometimes the case, there are competing names for a single variety, are both matters which convey valuable additional insights.

The 'naming issue' is an important one. Villagers are sometimes acutely aware of the misunderstandings that can arise from the localization of plant varietal names. Dialectical synthesis is not so much concerned with 'rationalizing' this situation, but in solving the problem of the exercise of power to name elements in the agricultural universe. 'Horizontal' dispute over rice names highlights the more acute 'vertical' problem of agricultural development, namely that of the new language imposed on farming by the outside agencies seeking to reorganise and control it. The village farming community must be involved in efforts to demystify the language of agricultural development, and thereby create a critical medium for genuine exchange of ideas. (This is a point returned to in the final section of this paper).

Thesis 3: Village 'modes of thought' are closed systems and lack anything equivalent to the processes of discovery in Western science. In consequence local technology is inadequate to the needs of the present and agricultural innovations have to be introduced from outside.

As noted above the two Kpa-Mende villages chosen for fieldwork are outside the scope of existing agricultural development schemes and there has been only minimal contact with formal agricultural extension agencies. The 31 farmers collaborating in our study were given two improved upland rice varieties, ROK 2 and ROK 3, proving popular in schemes such as the Northern Area project.[1] ROK 3 is developed from the parent stock known to our sample farmers as ngie-ma yakei and widely reckoned to be one of the highest-yielding local rice varieties. (Several farmers were quick to spot the parentage of ROK 3). The seed was distributed in 0.8 kg packets and farmers were given no information beyond that both varieties were intended for upland farming. The object of the exercise was to monitor farmers' responses. It is sometimes suggested that 'traditional' farmers are insufficiently alert to the advantages of new seeds, resulting in the mixing of improved seed and existing planting materials or even their consumption as food. It is widely assumed that peasant farmers will not derive much benefit from improved planting material unless they are given and hold to specific instructions about where and when to plant.

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[1] We would like to acknowledge the help of the Director of the Rice Research Station at Rokupr and his staff in providing us with planting material for this experiment.

All 31 farmers in our sample preserved their seed packs separate from other planting material. All used their judgement to select a suitable part of the farm to plant out the new seed. Choices of site varied. Some farmers planted near the farm but in order to maintain a convenient check on progress, e.g. to observe germination times, response to rainfall etc. Others chose sites, e.g. drier or moister soil, according to experience with local varieties closest in appearance to the new seed. Yet others appeared anxious to see whether the new seed would 'plug' strategic gaps, e.g. thrive in areas of the farm known to be difficult (by reason of slope, soil fertility etc.) for planting existing varieties. In a number of cases farmers hoed two plots of equal area side by side and planted their new varieties in one plot and an equivalent amount of a suitable local variety in the other. The amount of rice seed planted was noted by using a 'standard' volume measure, e. g. a cigarette cup, '3d pan' or milk tin. There is no doubt that farmers would, left to themselves, have continued the process by measuring their yields in the same standard units. In the event harvesting was 'supervised' in order to record results.

Farmers expressed general satisfaction with ROK 3 and planned to continue planting it. ROK 2 was seen to be less advantageous, but few farmers were prepared to abandon it outright. Several announced plans to do experiments in different parts of the farm. We are currently following up responses in the two growing seasons since the initial release of seed, and we are especially interested to try and discover to what extent the new varieties have been subject to deliberate 'seed multiplication' efforts and distributed to neighbours and relatives. Of 12 follow-up interviews so far completed three farmers have multiplied enough seed to plant up to half a hectare. Some farmers lost their seed due to various misfortunes and are requesting further supplies. Five or six farmers can now cite estimates for the relative yields of their new seed compared to other varieties planted.

The concept of a farm experiment - Mende hungue (indef.sing.) - 'trial' or 'test' - is widespread among farmers in our other sample village localities. One farmer in the village chosen to represent the cocoa/coffee zone of eastern Sierra Leone took us around a part of his plantation where, due to a temporary levelling out of the valley profile, he was uncertain whether cocoa or coffee would thrive best. Farmers are aware of the soil moisture, textural and fertility characteristics separating 'cocoa' and 'coffee' soils. Several descriptions of these differences, collected in the course of fieldwork, can be matched, indication for indication, against the diagnostic characteristics cited in agronomic consultants' reports to the Ministry of Agriculture concerning the potential for expanding cocoa and coffee cultivation in eastern Sierra Leone. In the case of this particular plantation the farmer had planted in effect a 6 x 4 trial of interspersed cocoa and coffee seedlings. Having noted the response he was able to 'read off' the critical soil boundary he was curious about and planted the rest of this part of his farm accordingly. Rice farmers also make use of 'alternate' planting for sample qualitative comparisons of different seed types, and many farm huts are surrounded by little 'quality control' experiments of this sort designed to determine the germination potential of various batches of seed before they are planted on an extensive scale.

An experimental approach to farming appears to be a commonplace of village life, and we see little reason to doubt that it has a long history in all parts of Sierra Leone. A group of farmers in one of the villages of the Northern Area project described learning about on-farm rice trials as part of their project training course. Since information had already been collected concerning indigenous experimental methodology which matched the results for the Mende villages described above we were keen to know what additional knowledge had been acquired in the training programme. We were told "IDA" experiments are better than the villagers' own because instead of marking out the boundaries of the trial plots by hoeing a boundary ridge project staff use wooden pegs and string.

The existence of valid experimental methodologies at village level is not a sufficient condition to guarantee technological progress, but it does suggest that local potentialities for invention and adjustment may have been underestimated. This tendency has been reinforced by anthropological writing which continues to pursue a false dichotomy between African 'traditional thought' and 'western science'. The problem is that the comparison is frequently drawn between the most abstruse, speculative areas of African cosmology and the most obviously operational and utilitarian areas of Western scientific practice. In addition there is a persistent tendency towards treating 'cosmologies' as if they were unified theories and shared by all members of a residential group or ethnic unit. It is important to recognise, therefore, the point at which practical reason gives way to the speculative and the way in which competing individuals and groups in society may project different 'versions' of a given explanatory paradigm according to the way they and their interests fit into the social process. It is now known for example, that traditional intercropping practices have important objective advantages long neglected by orthodox agronomy. Maximum utilization of sunlight, complementarity of soil nutrient requirements and minimization of soil erosion and the spread of weeds and pests are among the factors which lead to higher aggregate yields and reduced variability of output from intercropped farms compared to similar hectarages of monocrop cultivation. Fieldwork in the Kpa-Mende case-study villages revealed farm plots with more than 20 crops, other than rice, accounting for 50 - 75% of the total food value of the harvest, on some upland rice farms. Official statistics treat 'intercrops' as of unascertainable but minor importance leading to the conclusion that upland rice farm yields are especially low in Sierra Leone. How a farmer views intercropping depends very much on how much he or she commands, which in turn reflects position within the social nexus.

In general male heads of large households, able to articulate both sizeable family and co-operative labour groups find upland cultivation (which needs large work parties each year) retains its attractiveness and tend to 'legitimate' their preference by invoking the advantages of intercropping as a risk-minimizing, food-variety-enhancing strategy. Thus, for example, the proverb 'if you are poor you need to be cunning': if you make a cassava farm plant some pepper near it' was used to explain one farmer's continued preference for upland intercropping. But there is a different kind of poverty, experienced by widows and young farmers, namely that of being unable to attract enough labour to the work parties needed for upland farming. In part this is a question of not having, in the first place, the amount and variety of food resources to keep such a work party satisfied. Such farmers may prefer the one-off effort of organising hired labour to develop a swamp farm. They forgo the advantage of harvesting a wide variety of crops in addition to rice but are able to manage the labour in subsequent years with a minimum of outside help.

A 'forced-choice' question to farmers in three case-study villages within the Northern Area project concerning their preference for swamp rice and upland rice cultivation if only one type of farming was possible, showed 95% in favour of the swamp option and 5% in favour of upland intercropping. These preferences are more to do with farmers' abilities to attract labour than whether their 'world view' includes an assessment of the advantages of swamp rice cultivation which coincides with those listed in basic agronomy textbooks. The strongly ideological character of such preference assessments was made clear during fieldwork in the following way. Our objective was to learn about harvesting by participant observation. The owner of the farm was being chafed by his friends about the European in his party. Perhaps this was Kasila the God of Water come to capture the farmer's strength and change his way of life. If so the owner retorted then he would know by setting a test. If the visitor ate more from the large midday rice bowl - a stew containing the full range of almost all the crops growing in the rice field - than the other workers then he might have cause to worry. Otherwise he would conclude that the visitor had no wish to undermine that which the farmer valued most - the chance to feed a large family on the diverse produce from his upland intercropped rice farm. A somewhat queasy visitor easily failed the test and the gods of traditional agriculture were vindicated.

Perhaps only outsiders are confused about which explanations are intended to be practical and which relate to the more theoretically speculative areas of cosmological argumentation. The same group of farmers was in little doubt that their worst agricultural pest, towei (def. sing.), a species of grey monkey, could be explained in terms of reduction of forest cover due to shifting cultivation and the consequent destruction of the trees that provided its favoured food. The villagers had carefully observed the monkey's behaviour patterns and used this knowledge to strategic advantage in a series of dawn hunting raids designed to trap monkeys still congregated in trees used for sleeping. On the other hand the second most troublesome pest, the cane rat, is less easy to explain, except in terms of the reduction in numbers of natural enemies such as leopards. This fails to account for the marked variation in cane-rat damage from year to year and from farm to farm. The animal's habits are much less easy to monitor than the monkey. Faced with a genuine mystery many farmers are prepared to seek advice from a diviner. This is far from stereotypical pre-rational preference for mystical, mystified, explanation posited as a built-in cultural characteristic of 'traditional' life by some less-perceptive outside commentators on African rural development.

Thesis 4: that agricultural change is inhibited by inadequate commercial institutions (e.g. credit, market information and insurance) and low levels of literacy and numeracy among farmers.

Gay and Cole (1967) describe how they asked groups of Peace Corps volunteers and Liberian farmers to estimate the number of cups of rice contained in a large bowl of rice. The volunteers' estimates fluctuated by as much as 35% + of the true figure, whereas the farmers' estimates were within range 9% of the true figure. The conclusion is that farmers are competent at relevant computation. Following this lead we developed during fieldwork a number of simple games[1] to elucidate trade-offs between different seed varieties under conditions of fluctuating rainfall, competition for resources in weed and pest control, and how farmers were prepared to trade off 'taste' against 'yield' in different rice varieties. All helped confirm the farmers acuity and the results sometimes indicated unexpected points of view. A good example of this is

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[1] Some of these games use local resources, e.g. the African board game 'mankala' (cf. Townshend, 1979; Barker, 1979).

provided by the results of the trade-off 'game' in which farmers were asked to rank local and 'improved' rice varieties in terms of taste. In the simplest version (used in a questionnaire survey) the most and least favoured varieties were compared and farmers asked whether they would prefer 10 bags of the most 'tasty' or 12 bags of the least 'tasty' rice grown on their farms. The majority of farmers opted for the 10 bag solution. A reason frequently cited was that this would mean 'more food for the family'. This suggests that the concept of 'taste' relates to 'satisfaction' (rather than consumer 'preference' in the way it might be understood in conventional economic analysis) and that 'satisfaction' in this instance is related to the food value of the rice. Several farmers argued that they needed to eat less often when using preferred varieties. This is an interesting point which is being explored further through analysis of the food value and processing losses associated with 'traditional' rice varieties. Preliminary results suggest that there may
be some 'improved' problems with ROK 3, a variety farmers generally describe as high yielding but poor tasting. It is also worth noting that most farmers argue the 'taste' of rice is adversely affected by fertilizer use.

Another game, this time concerning rice seed response to drought conditions, presented in effect the pay-off matrix of two-person zero-sum game between farmer and climate. Stones were taken to represent rice bags and farmers were asked to state a preference for a variety 'A', yielding 60 bushels in a good year and 20 bushels in a bad year, or a variety 'B', yielding 40 bushels in a good year and 30 bushels in a bad year, from a one hectare farm. Good and bad years occur with equal likelihood. A marked tendency to prefer 'A' to 'B' was apparent in only one of the sample villages. Judged by annual cash sales of farm produce and livestock ownership this was the wealthiest of the villages concerned, commercial production of rice having been a feature of the economy as long ago as the middle nineteenth century. Elsewhere, and especially among women farmers and farmers not participating in the World Bank project, the preference was for 'B'. Farmers' comments frequently indicated realization that 'B' was less profitable but preferable on the grounds of risk minimization, e.g.:

> 'I prefer 'B' because it ensures my family subsistence even in a disaster year - the yield is less variable between good and bad years than 'A'.'
>
> ' 'B' gives a more stable and reliable yield than 'A'.'
>
> ' The risk of starvation of my people is much lower with variety 'B' than with 'A'.'
>
> ' 'B' is preferred because if there is a sequence of bad years I would still be able to cope with my family requirements.'
>
> ' The risk level is lower with variety 'B'.

These and similar comments reveal an accurate awareness, on the part of farmers, that their 'insurance' needs have to be built into the farming system. Rural development planners show a disregard for this need when they promote agricultural innovations without taking steps to assess whether or not higher ranges of variation are associated with higher average output. A rare exception is the following passage from an assessment report relating to an oxen ploughing scheme in The Gambia:

> Both ox and manual treatment yields had a higher variance around the mean than the control compounds, highlighting the fact that the introduction of improved agricultural techniques drastically increases the risk and uncertainity in a farming system that institutionally attempts to minimise both these elements. (Dunsmore et al 1976 p. 324).

The farmers in our sample opting for 'A', the higher profit, higher risk variety, provided comments indicative of commitment to a different perspective concerning the farm enterprise, e.g.

> 'I prefer a variety that will yield me a quick profit since I feed my people from other sources.'
>
> ' I prefer 'A' because I am involved in making a quick profit which I can then use to expand my business.'

Here, then, is a paradox. Profit-hungry farmers - the innovative elite of conventional rural development theory - are concerned to maximise profits precisely because many are in the process of transferring resources into trading and other urban-focused activities. Thus abandonment of liquidation of agricultural 'capital' (in this case farming-system resilience to climatic hazard) is linked to growth of interest in other sectors of the economy. The dangers implicit in this tendency are not yet adequately recognised by World

Bank policy makers to judge by comments such as the following:

> 'The poor are poor because they have low incomes. Cash is important to alleviate poverty' 'A cash economy is an opening to the outside world' 'Better health and education can only be achieved through an economy of exchange'.
>
> 'Debt is a mark of growth. Developed-world agriculture has always relied upon debt'.
> (World Bank officials cited in Payer (1979)

One farmer we talked to about indebtedness had a different attitude, citing the proverb 'the dog would not sleep with its mother if it had a wife'. This was in relation to local sources of credit, but could be extended to cover project sources as well, because his problem is not with high rates of interest but with the causes of indebtedness in the first instance. Considerable amounts of borrowing in rural Sierra Leone are undertaken to cover the food shortages of the pre-harvest 'hungry season'. This in turn is not so much a result of low aggregate yields but of variability in output. Risks associated with farming are numerous, and increasing. A major problem in Sierra Leone stems from the uncertain nature of the family labour supply. Year by year families are reduced in size by outmigration of young males in particular, and as a result sickness becomes a progressively more severe problem among an ageing labour force. Stories abound of how farmers are unable to bring a farm to harvest because they become ill at a crucial point in the year's work. In the old days of large family work units such misfortune would not seriously affect the family food supply. One farmer, out of a family labour unit of 20, breaking a limb at tree-clearing time, means at worst a minor reduction in farm size.

One farmer working alone, with part-time help from a wife and daughter but commitments to contribute to the feeding of city-resident relatives, finds an accident during the heavy work of clearing a catastrophe of major proportions. As 'development' exacerbates the risks of rural life so borrowing is increasingly resorted to as a means to survive. Because of this background to rural credit provision many farmers were prepared to argue that 'local' credit, with its high interest rates, might on occasion have advantages over the World Bank scheme. Village money-lenders adopt a flexible approach to advancing credit and re-scheduling loan repayment because they live with the problems that cause debt, and understand their social roots. High interest rates are the price that money-lenders extract for their intimate understanding of these problems. 'Official' credit has to operate in a much more anonymous and rigid way, and loan recovery alienates many farmers by its clumsiness despite the obvious attraction of low interest rates.

Three years after the performance of the play discussed earlier in this paper some farmers have the material for a potential second act, in which the farmer in the story, having sought rescue from the clutches of the villainous village money-lender by taking an IDA loan, is now in court for the recovery of his IDA loan. It is a harsh irony that in order to repay he has to turn to the original villain of the play to bail him out. In reality the true villain of the piece is the system, not the individual within it. If farmers are falling into debt because of the increased riskiness of their farming operations then attempts to 'monetize' and 'capitalise' the rural economy through a cheap credit policy without first tackling the 'risk' issue will serve only to intensify their problems. Numerous project farmers we interviewed said they knew people who were now more in debt than previously as a result of having to resort to money-lenders to clear their outstanding debts to the World Bank project.

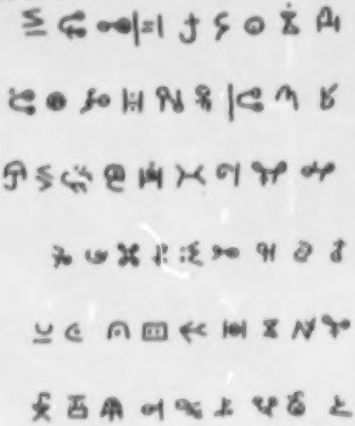
If we take the trouble, therefore, to listen to farmers, especially those increasingly oppressed by debt, the argument that agricultural underdevelopment stems from inadequate commercial institutions begins to appear full of ambiguity. To these farmers even existing merchant capitalist institutions are all too adequate to the task of exploiting their vulnerability. On the principle that if you cannot join them then try and beat them there is evidence that some farmers have striven to resist the undermining effects of 'monetisation' and capitalist penetration by intensifying their reliance on the 'traditional', pre-capitalist, institutions of village life. The village hierarchy in one of our sample villages actually attempts to operate a ban on rice sales to dealers from Freetown and the diamond areas. The rationale for this is that the rice dealers, by offering credit in the 'hungry' season, exploit the farmer and divert his political allegiance away from authority within the village. Evidence for turning inwards towards 'traditional' pre-capitalist political economy is to be seen in the amount of wealth which villagers still invest in various ceremonial purposes (funeral and initiation ceremonies for example). These 'investments' are closely linked to the reproduction and maintenance of 'traditional' family and work-party organization, which in turn permits continuance of upland shifting cultivation. In one sample an average of between 30 and 40% of the family's disposable resources, apart from food for subsistence, appears to be devoted to these kinds of 'ceremonial' investments each year. Nor is there any shortage of local 'cultural capital' and indigenous intellectual confidence. The table below shows that the majority of non-project farmers interviewed see a clear distinction between their own general knowledge of agriculture - described as 'excellent' or 'good' - and a knowledge of extension agents, generally only rated 'good' to 'fair'.

		Very good	Good	Fair	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don't know
PROJECT No. 19	Farmer	10	9				
	Extension agent	2	9	8			
NON-PROJECT No. 17	Farmer	11	5				1
	Extension agent		4	9			4

TABLE Bumban farmers' evaluations of their and extension agents general knowledge concerning farming.

What is especially interesting is that even those farmers participating in the World Bank scheme, distinguish between their own farming knowledge and that of extension agents. This would seem to suggest that agricultural 'development' has not yet undermined farmers' self-confidence or produced conceptual 'dependency' in this part of Sierra Leone.

On the other hand it is doubtful whether any greater percentage of farm households succeed by playing the 'traditional' strategy than succeed by pursuing the petty capitalist route from commodity production into trade. Both beget conflict and contradiction in the long run. Since the folk media being drawn upon to construct an antithesis to the theses of planning orthodoxy only survive because they are integral elements in the 'traditional' option it is clear that they cannot be seen as representing progress by themselves.



A prime example of this is provided by the case of the indigenous script used to write the Mende language in one of our sample villages. *Kikaku* script (above) challenges the notion that "backwardness in African societies is partly the consequence of an inability to invent writing". Like the Vai script, *kikaku* is based on a syllabary rather than an alphabet and owes little therefore, except at the most general level, to the examples of Roman and Arabic scripts. This provides ambiguous evidence for the belief that literacy invariably facilitates rural development. Its principal use is to keep accounts of major social functions such as marriage and burial ceremonies. These ceremonies involve considerable transfers of wealth and resources, and are a major reason for indebtedness in the first place. Larger ceremonies, with participants from further afield, or more complex bridewealth transactions over a longer time period, are more readily negotiable through the employment of a kikaku clerk. The result is that the scale of wealth differentiation, accumulation, and indebtedness is increased.

This is why throughout this paper we have argued the need for dialectical opposition to bring out the weaknesses of both 'modernization' orthodoxy and its legitimation in terms of the 'science idiom', and of the 'traditionalist' option legitimated by 'folk media' transactions.

The synthesis now required will result only from a renewed approach to rural development unifying theory and practice, and cannot be specified in advance. It would be appropriate however to conclude with a comment on how the dialectic outlined in this paper might be used to generate the kind of creative tension essential for such renewal.

The practical implications of the arguments in this paper are unspectacular. They do not concern projects to 'raise consciousness' (cf. Freire, 1970). That, as we have shown, is already high by any standards. They are not even aimed at initiating 'dialogue'. In fact they are not about 'initiating' anything. Rather they consist of suggestions for helping the analysis and critique already present at local level to flow a little more widely and freely. We focus comments on work we envisage as being feasible with extension agents and with farmers' groups.

For extension agents a key objective is to sharpen awareness of local critiques of their activities, and to encourage the view that such critiques are both necessary and of constructive significance. Much of our fieldwork methodology - especially the 'gaming' aspects - could be readily adapted for use by change agents interested to explore these issues. There is an initial problem, however, in that the training of 'middle level manpower' in development is so often bedevilled by a surfeit of vulgar positivism. Philosophical issues relating to fieldwork are treated as an irrelevant luxury, and rigorously text-book tied 'practicalism' offers little or no scope for the development of critical field method. Even the most up-to-date extension methods (e.g. Training and Visit) are still primarily focused on managerial and organizational issues, and little if any attention is paid to the way extension workers are actually engaged in the 'social construction of reality'. It is unfair to expect a flexible response to the articulation of local viewpoints when extension agents are so rigidly 'constructed' as technocrats. In strategic terms, therefore, there may be something to be said for using folk media as feedback mechanisms in extension, e.g. the first of the two farmer-level environmental monitoring models outlined in Barker, Oguntoyinbo and Richards (1977), in order to prepare the ground for more reflective and sociologically aware extension curricula.

In relation to possible work with and for farmers groups we have chosen to examine two notions, 'improved accounting' and 'people's science', as examples. The conventional argument is that media for better accounting - literacy and numeracy - provide a basis for more 'rational' production. Goody (1977) claims that literacy marks a major step forward in that it releases energy tied up in the labour of memorization, permits a critical approach to sources and ultimately helps create an 'open' society. Against this, as suggested above, it can be argued that folk accounting media - both in terms of numeracy and literacy - are not as underdeveloped as is often supposed, but that their deployment will not necessarily lead to improved efficiency of production. The eighteenth century enthusiast for better farm accounting, John Billingsley, conceded that the ordinary working farmer often had a very good idea of what was or was not profitable without the aid of figures. The real beneficiary from the introduction of book-keeping was the 'gentleman farmer' who might only personally supervise work in his fields for an hour a day surrounded by 'servants united in one common league of fraud and deception' (quoted in Hudson, 1972).

Adoption of formal accounting procedures in British farming at the time of the agricultural revolution, was thus specifically of most benefit to the large landowner. In other words, improved medium is only 'improved' in relation to and from the point of view of the group whose interests it serves at a particular historical juncture. This insight gives an answer to the apparent contradictions outlined above. 'Better' farm 'accounting' in Sierra Leone must be specific to the circumstances of the groups concerned. Conventional financial accounting, whether double-entry book-keeping or local accounting in kikaku script, tends to serve money-lending interests best. Ordinary farmers become indebted to money-lenders partly through the impact of risk factors, e.g. accidents, ill-health and climatic hazards. It is possible to envisage therefore, the development of an improved form of 'risk accounting' (with or without the use of literacy) which concentrates on the assessments of innovations and technology alternatives in terms of the risks involved.

There is a broader sense in which the term accounting applies, namely to the process whereby specific 'versions' of rural development problems and achievements are established in administrative and scientific media. The above argument applies to this wider notion of accounting in that 'versions' of a problem reflect group interests. A dialectical assessment of the privilege and interest built into such accounts then suggests that deliberate steps should be taken to generate alternative accounts acceptable to various disadvantaged or neglected groups, e.g. 'subsistence' or women farmers, children and agricultural labourers. One way of achieving this is for social scientists to first attempt provisional accounts of agricultural and rural 'development' from the perspectives of these groups (E.P. Thompson's (1963) The making of the English working class and William Cobbett's (1821) Cottage economy are in their different ways instructive examples of the genre). The challenge then is to produce such accounts in a non-authoritative manner, in such a way that they can be meaningfully 'revised' and 'corrected' by the groups concerned in the process of their practical struggles. Such work must, as a minimum requirement, be produced in local languages.

The concept of 'people's science' has been elaborated elsewhere (e.g. Wisner, O'Keefe and Westgate, 1976). Our intention here is to append a few notes on practical aspects which are relevant in the Sierra Leone context. The process of recording and formalizing local ecological knowledge, so that it is communicable from group to group across linguistic divides, and convertible into the terms used by 'established' science is important if local knowledge systems are to continue to develop from within and secure a recognised standing in relation to national and international 'knowledge bureaucracies'. This kind of work has been given a valuable start in Sierra Leone through Deighton's (1957) *Vernacular Botanical Vocabulary*, but needs now to be much extended. One direction worth exploring would be to add to the rudimentary knowledge concerning farmers experimental methods reported in this paper. Local ideas concerning plant conservation also have considerable potential significance. Building local knowledge into school science curricula is another potential line of development (cf. recent, as yet unpublished work by Gary Knamiller). Assisting in the organization of 'farmers' committees' and 'village seminars' to explore and define research problems and to design experiments in resource management and monitoring (cf. Barker *et*. *al*. 1977) is an important aspect of the transition from 'folk ecology' to 'peoples science'. Otherwise there is the danger that the formalisation of local knowledge will end in 'formalism' - the deconstruction of folk media prior to their acquisition as museum exhibits.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

TOWARDS DIALECTICAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Much conventional rural development planning assumes village people lack voice and competence. In this paper we have argued that both assumptions are open to question. The typical village is the scene of a number of vigorous critiques of the development process. Proverbs, songs, games etc. provide commentary upon, and challenges to, development orthodoxy, entering genuinely new perspectives for consideration at the level of 'discourse'. Media such as those used by farmers to monitor their agricultural resource-base challenge the development paradigm at the level of 'action' by, in effect, nullifying important aspects of the distinction conventionally drawn between 'traditional' and 'modern' agricultural practices. As a first step towards coping with the problem of a tendency within rural development to reproduce 'inappropriateness' it is suggested that development schemes should be tuned into relevant sources of critique of the kind described above. We reject the notion, however, that folk media constitute a set of convenient instruments for channelling 'local' information into the development process in order to legitimate that process and facilitate acceptance of its decisions. Folk media have to be understood critically in relation to their social contexts and analysis of these contexts reveals that criticisms of the conventional development paradigm are grounded in different and often contradictory local vested interests. Appreciation of the ways in which these interests are integral to a variety of technical competences and cosmological viewpoints provides a stimulus to clarification of the way in which similar vested interests are 'embedded' within apparently 'objective' sets of procedures for arriving at planning decisions. Folk media are valuable, therefore, not because they convey 'information' but because they contribute to the 'demystification' of 'development' by challenging the hidden agenda of the planner's decision processes. Folk media critique asserts the rights of rural people to enter items upon those agenda. Rural change agents must develop their own critical skills to a much greater degree. At the same time, it is vital that folk media continue to operate and develop. The proper role for those interested in the field is to help create suitable opportunities for such developments. Some practical suggestions have been outlined.

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POLITICAL THEATRE AND DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA[1]

by

Ellen Judd

China is a country whose rapid development and whose creative approach toward development has attracted considerable international attention in recent years. One significant aspect of this approach has been a strong emphasis on political education directed at the entire population. While the leading force behind China's development, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), is committed to a materialist philosophy, its materialism is one which gives an important place to the subjective element: "It is man's social being that determines his thinking. Once the correct ideas characteristic of the advanced class are grasped by the masses, these ideas turn into a material force which changes society and changes the world."[2] It is this understanding which lies behind the CCP's consistent emphasis on mass political education, of which its work in the performing arts is one part.

The use of literature, art, music, and drama for political purposes was not new to China in the twentieth century, but had been an established element in Chinese political culture for many centuries. There is, therefore, a continuity with the past on a general level, but the twentieth century has also brought some distinctly new elements into the situation.

At the turn of the century China was in one of its recurrent periods of dynastic decline, marked by economic difficulties and internal revolts. In this case the decline was exacerbated by population explosion[3] and the incursions of foreign powers. China's defeat in war with Japan and her increasingly obvious weakness compared with other foreign countries prompted many Chinese to re-examine their cultural institutions and to borrow aspects of foreign cultures. Initially this borrowing was limited to science and technology, but later included foreign ideas about social and political organisation, such as democracy and socialism. The early part of the century saw a volatile and creative mix of nationalist commitment and international stimulation.

The May Fourth Movement, which began with a demonstration against Japan on that date in 1919, continued for several years as a nationalist and cultural movement. Although the vernacular language had been used to some extent in written literature before 1919, the May Fourth Movement marked the threshold after which the vernacular gained dominance over the literary (classical) language previously used. At the same time, Western artistic genres and styles, such as European-style spoken drama, were introduced into China. Cultural circles from the 1920s on were largely nationalist and left-leaning, and at the same time heavily influenced by Western culture, including European progressive literature. A major trend in this period was that of works intended for the benefit of the labouring people, but written in non-Chinese styles in a Westernised vernacular, which only the literate products of Western or Western-influenced schools could understand and appreciate. Efforts to bridge the gap between progressive Westernised literature and the overwhelmingly illiterate people who maintained a Chinese tradition in the arts were made in the 1930s, in particular by such associations as the League of Left-wing Writers and the League of Left-wing Dramatists. These efforts were only partially successful because of the contradiction between their political intentions and their artistic methods, and because of governmental opposition to their activities which resulted in arrest and even execution for a number of those involved.

The context in which these changes in the arts were taking place was one of continual political upheaval, and the arts were highly politicised throughout this period. The political conditions of the period may be very briefly summarised: In 1911 the Qing dynasty fell in a revolution led by Sun Zhongshan's (Sun Yat-sen's) Nationalist Party, which then failed to consolidate its power over the nation. The following period was one of conflict between regional warlords. In the mid-1920s the Nationalist Party, in a united front with the Communist Party, succeeded in defeating the northern warlords and establishing a fragile national unity. In 1927 Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) led the Nationalist Party in an attack on the Communist Party, after which the Communist Party retreated to the countryside and established a number of rural bases. A civil war between the two parties continued until 1937 when they joined in an uneasy united front against the Japanese invasion of China. During the war against Japan, the Communist Party grew in strength compared with the Nationalist Party. Efforts at a peaceful resolution of their differences after 1945 failed and the civil war resumed. In 1949 the People's Republic of China was declared established under Communist Party leadership and the Nationalist

Party thereafter retained control of only one province, that of Taiwan.

It should be noted that while the CCP considered itself the political party of the proletariat, it was unable to maintain a substantial presence in the cities after 1927. By the 1930s its main centres of activity were remote areas of the countryside, and it was therefore largely involved in work with the peasantry. Only in 1947 did the CCP return to the cities in strength. In the intervening twenty years it was a rural-based party.

This paper will be concerned with the use of yangge (a folk dramatic form) in political education in the Communist-led regions of northern China in the 1940s. This topic has been chosen because it focuses on the most creative efforts in China to resolve problems which had beset the arts in China for several decades: how to unite revolutionary politics with folk culture and how to unite artists of affluent, intellectual background with the working people.

Among the Han people of China,[4] a wide range of traditional media were in existence in the 1940s, especially in the countryside. While foreign media such as film, were making an appearance and beginning to influence Chinese culture, especially in the major coastal cities, the Chinese cultural tradition remained vigourous and continued to dominate the cultural life of the countryside, which is where most of the population lived. During the early part of the century, the traditional arts as well as other aspects of culture and society suffered from almost continual warfare and severe economic hardship, but did persist despite these obstacles.

The traditional media included: music (string, percussion, and wind instruments and voice), dance, opera (as Chinese drama is usually described in English), puppetry, storytelling in numerous performing styles collectively known as quyi, acrobatics, magic acts, watercolour painting, paper-cutting, and carving. The performing arts were especially important and were generally a combination of different skills. Chinese opera is a combination of acting, singing, instrumental music, dance, and acrobatics. Storytelling in most forms included musical elements.[5]

Being highly diverse in both form and content, a case could be made for the traditional media conveying a number of different sets of attitudes. There was some portrayal of conventional Confucian morality (for example, loyalty to the emperor and filial piety). There was also expression of the hardships suffered by the common people, although this was restricted by official disapproval. There were fictionalised tales of emperors and heroes from the past and many superstitious tales about gods, ghosts, and demons. Prominent among the folk forms of traditional media were romantic items, often of a licentious nature. The historical practice of the traditional media indicated that they could be used either to reinforce conservative ideas and existing cultural patterns or as a vehicle of protest. The nature of some of the performing arts as brief items of dance, music, and stylised acting limited their ability to serve as vehicles of complicated ideas, unless it was a matter of reminding the audience of the already familiar. The extent of this limitation, too, was variable.

Since it is difficult to generalise about such a varied cultural life, and since this paper is concerned with one particular form, *yangge*, it would seem useful to discuss the traditional *yangge*. *Yangge*, or rice-planting songs, are a major element in the traditional folk culture of northern China. They exist in a wide range of local variations throughout the ethnic Han regions of China north of the Yangtze River. Somewhat similar folk forms can be found in the south,[6] but it is the *yangge* of northern China which are of interest in relation to the *yangge* movement of the 1940s. The name *yangge* (*yang* meaning rice shoot and *ge* meaning song) is derived from the custom of singing such songs while transplanting rice or doing other agricultural work.[7] The *yangge* to be discussed here, however, represent greater artistic elaboration and are either dances or plays or a combination of both. In whatever form they take, they include music as well.

Yangge have a lengthy history of which there is some record in earlier written documents. The name *yangge* can be traced at least as far back as the Song dynasty (960-1279 A.D.). Over the centuries it has taken root throughout the countryside and has been elaborated upon in many different ways.[8] Two variations of particular relevance in this context are those of Dingxian in Hebei Province and those of Shaanxi Province. Dingxian *yangge* was comparatively developed as a dramatic form and some efforts to reform it had been made earlier. People involved in that effort went to Yan'an during the war against Japan and their experience contributed to reform work going on there.[9] Yan'an, in Shaanxi, was then the cultural as well as the political centre of the border regions.

The yangge movement began there and was largely based on the local, Shaanxi variation of yangge, which is the variation of main concern here. An important distinction to keep in mind is that between yangge dances and yangge plays. Although the two were often performed together and both were the object of reform, they are different forms. The yangge dance was a dancing procession which would take place through the streets of the village, punctuated by short plays. Twenty, thirty, or more dancers would slowly make their way through the village streets performing a particular dance unique to yangge. It was a stylised and exaggerated rhythmic walk, often consisting of two or three steps forward and one step back, with all the dancers following the lead of one dancer at the front. This dance was accompanied by musicians on a variety of instruments, with percussion dominating and providing the rhythm for the dancing. The dancers would not simply proceed down the street but would trace more or less intricate patterns while doing so. The dancers were costumed and some were dressed as certain character-types, such as clown or monk. The leader would often carry an open umbrella at the head of the procession. During the course of the procession men and women danced in pairs, the "women" often being men dressed as women. The couples would perform risqué dialogues during the procession. The yangge plays which took place at intervals during the processions or in open places typically consisted of a smaller number of characters acting in small plays consisting largely of singing. Such plays tended to be loosely structured internally and there was no connection between the various plays which might be performed on any one occasion. The subject matter of the plays was largely taken from everyday life in the countryside and, as with the dances, featured romantic themes.[10]

The artistic form of the _yangge_ plays was one which shared many of the characteristics of traditional Chinese opera. It was a composite art form consisting of dance, instrumental and sung music, and dialogue. It was a symbolic art form relying on certain fixed character-types which could be readily identified by their costumes. Theatrical properties were at a minimum and a combination of mime and theatrical convention took their place. Compared with opera, _yangge_ plays were artistically simpler: there was a smaller number of character-types in use, and fewer instruments; the make-up and range of acting conventions were more limited; and the plays were shorter, with the themes often being developed in a coarse or bawdy manner. _Yangge_ usually lacked printed scripts and often lacked stages or other theatrical buildings. The music was largely based on folksong styles.[11]

The _yangge_ plays were typically humorous and even farcical. They did not develop complicated themes and sometimes even lacked story lines. They consisted primarily of humorous exchanges, very often between a female character-type (_dan_) and a male clown character-type (_chou_). Such exchanges had sexual connotations and might be quite vulgar. Serious topics were avoided as the art form did not lend itself to the expression of complex themes, and because the place _yangge_ occupied in rural cultural life was that of providing entertainment, especially at festivals, and the demand then was for cheerful entertainment.[12]

Performances of _yangge_ took place during the agricultural off-season and at the time of festivals, especially at spring festival and to celebrate the harvest in the fall. They also occured at the time of religious festivals and were performed at temple fairs. They had a definite place in the yearly calendar of the peasantry of northern China. The performers were mostly local peasants who were amateur or, in some cases, semi-professional, performing yangge during the agricultural off-season and working on the land the rest of the year. Consequently the artistic aspects of yangge were not highly refined -- the dance, for example, was simple enough to be learned in only a few days. Other aspects of yangge were also circumscribed by its largely non-professional character -- its material aspects, such as costumes and stages, were poor or lacking.[13]

There is a lack of information on the number of such yangge troupes. One available indication is a report that in 1944 in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region there were 994 yangge troupes, or about one for every 1,500 people. Over sixty percent of these troupes were performing traditional yangge.[14] This represents a fairly high density, although the seasonal nature of the troupes should be kept in mind.

It should be noted that these areas also had some people professionally engaged in folk arts. Many of these were blind or otherwise disabled so that they were unable to make a living in agriculture. Their livelihood was precarious and their social status very low. They served the valuable social functions of creating much of the folk culture and of maintaining both repertoire and artistic skills.

The yangge movement arose out of processes of fundamental change then taking place in both the political sphere and the cultural sphere and is best understood within the context of those changes.

Culturally, the contradiction mentioned above between the political aims of progressive writers and artists and the inaccessibility of their works to their intended audience among the working people had led to a number of experiments in the preceding decade. Foreign style spoken drama which had a politically progressive history abroad within China and the "living newspaper" of early post-1917 Soviet creation were utilised to overcome the barrier of mass illiteracy. These forms were very strange to much of the Chinese working population, so efforts were also made to use folksong and opera styles, often by simply inserting new political content into old forms -- for example, by putting new words to well-known folksongs. This was known as the method of putting "new wine in old bottles." Early experiments in yangge reform grew out of this wider cultural context.

Politically, the impetus for the movement and active promotion of it came from the CCP as a product of its rectification movement in 1942-1944. This was a period in which the CCP made a major theoretical effort at sinicising Marxism-Leninism and presenting a set of independent policies on a range of issues. One of these issues was literature and art. The "Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art"[15] given by Mao Zedong in May, 1942, and published the following year with strong endorsement by the CCP, represented a formulation of CCP policy on literature and art. While the CCP and many of its members had been active in artistic matters previously, the CCP had not had a clear policy before 1942. From the time of the "Talks," there was such a policy and it was vigorously implemented.

The goal of the CCP in the cultural sphere was unambiguously expressed by Mao in the "Talks:"

> In our struggle for the liberation of the Chinese nation there are various fronts, among which there are the fronts of the pen and of the gun, the cultural and the military fronts. To defeat the enemy we must rely primarily on the army with guns. But this army alone is not enough; we must also have a cultural army, which is absolutely indispensable for uniting our own ranks and defeating the enemy.[16]

Within this general context, the *yangge* movement was intended to be the vehicle for cultural influence upon the peasantry of the border regions. *Yangge* was more suitable for this purpose than the Western-influenced forms more extensively used by the CCP in the past.

The *yangge* movement was also seen as a step forward in China's cultural development. Departing from a materialist viewpoint, the CCP saw art as a reflection of the economic base of the society. In the midst of a revolution engaged in fundamentally changing this economic base, a new art would be needed. This would not just be a passive reflection of the new society coming into being, but would also act to promote this transformation. The CCP saw itself as leading developments in all spheres of society and culture as well as in politics, and one of its activities was the promotion of reform in the arts. In the *yangge* movement, therefore, the CCP's concern was not only with supporting folk art and using it for political purposes, but also with reforming the art itself. The previous practice of putting "new wine in old bottles" was rejected as mechanical. The new approach was one based on the idea that the content and the form of art were inherently connected. In changing the content, the form would have to change, too. The *yangge* movement was both a mass movement to spread and utilise folk art and a movement to transform it into something new. The new form was not to be created out of thin air but was to be based on the previous forms, which was the meaning of the slogan then raised: "weed through the old to brin[illegible]rth the new." The *yangge* promoted in the *yangge* movement were *yangge* [illegible] new variety.

The beginning of the *yangge* movement can be considered to have been the 1943 spring festival, although there was some previous work done with *yangge*. That there had been some such experiments done at Dingxian has already been noted. There had also been efforts made in this direction in relation to the *yangge* of Shaanxi. As early as 1937 efforts were being made to adapt the local performing arts popular in the northwest of China to the new political content.[17] Research was also done during the late 1930s and early 1940s on the folksongs of northern Shaanxi and north-western Shanxi,which contributed to the reform of the musical aspect of *yangge*. Some study and adaptation was also begun on *yangge* dances before 1942.[18] There were also a few rudimentary efforts made in reforming *yangge* at this time, most notably by Liu Zhiren who was a peasant and a renowned *yangge* troupe leader. He combined the local *yangge* dance with another local folk form known as "running stories" (*pao gushi*), which were stories performed in mime either on horseback or on the ground. This produced a new form (then called _xin gushi_) which introduced a narrative element to _yangge_ dance. He also experimented with new content and initiated innovations in the singing and dancing of _yangge_.[19] Among the changes in _yangge_ which took place in the late 1930s and early 1940s were the further development of _yangge_ as a dramatic form; the replacement of the umbrella at the head of the troupe with a sickle and an axe; the removal of the role of clown; the introduction of the role of traitor; the reduction or elimination of sexual content; and the introduction of anti-Japanese content.[20]

The question of whether or not to make these efforts to reform _yangge_ was a contentious one in the early 1940s. There was a strong body of opinion which considered _yangge_ decadent and undesirable and which doubted the value of adapting it.[21] The opposition to using _yangge_ as the basis for a new art form was dominant in the early 1940s, and as a result the reform of _yangge_ did not make much progress or become generally accepted until 1943.

Implementation of the CCP's new policy on literature and art showed its first results at the spring festival of 1943. Spring festival, marking the beginning of the lunar new year and falling in the middle of the agricultural off-season, is the traditional annual peak of cultural activity in the countryside. The 1943 spring festival was the first one after the establishment of the new policy. For the 1943 spring festival, several of the professional cultural units presented a range of cultural offerings included _yangge_ and other forms of drama, woodcuts and paintings put up in the streets, and also fiction and poetry. Of all the presentations, the most successful were the *yangge* of the Lu Xun Academy of Art, in particular the short *yangge* play, *Xiong Mei Kai Huang* (*Brother and Sister Open the Wasteland*).[22]

Xiong Mei Kai Huang successfully captured some of the artistic characteristics of traditional *yangge*, such as the use of local dialect and local tunes. More notably it adapted one of the traditional theatrical patterns -- that of a joking conflict between a male clown character and a female character -- to a new political content. The sexual connotations were removed by the simple device of making the characters brother and sister. The theme of conflict over opening wasteland and increasing production required that one character be progressive and the other be backward. But, as one of the people involved in the reform of *yangge* pointed out, that would have made fifty percent of the characters in this simple two-character play backward, which was not considered an acceptable representation of the real situation in the border region.[23] The problem was resolved by having the brother pretend to be sleeping in the fields when he should have been working, giving the sister ample opportunity to harangue him about the importance of opening more wasteland to increase agricultural production. The humorous conflict between the two permitted the introduction of a substantial amount of political content without becoming tendentiously boring. The fact that the brother was only pretending to be backward, a fact known to the audience from the beginning, allowed the play to maintain the cheerful and humorous air of traditional *yangge*. An additional factor contributing to its success when first performed in Yan'an in 1943 was the talent of the performers, which helped show that yangge could be reformed without losing its artistic flavour.

The success of the new yangge of early 1943 led to the creation of scores of yangge troupes. The literati were mobilised to create more yangge and performers were sent into the countryside to perform yangge in an organised fashion. This was referred to as "sending yangge to the countryside" (yangge xiaxiang). Every local area (fenqu) in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region was sent a special drama troupe in 1943 for the purpose of spreading the new yangge. This was considered the first step toward a more ambitious goal, "countryside yangge" (xiangxia yangge), that is, yangge created and performed by the peasants themselves. Due to the seasonal nature of cultural activity, the next peak of activity was the 1944 spring festival, at which point the yangge movement had reached other north China border regions and army units. As the movement spread, selected yangge troupes were identified as models to be emulated in their localities. This served to spread the movement and to indicate concretely what was being proposed.[24]

As will be quite apparent from the above, the dominant institution in initiating the yangge movement and in making decisions with respect to it was the Chinese Communist Party. The Propaganda Department of the CCP Central Committee was the vehicle for this and its directives, such as the one of 7 November 1943 on carrying out the CCP's policy on literature and art,[25] were implemented in the border regions. Since the government of the border regions operated under the leadership of the CCP, its resources (such as the educational str described above) were at the disposal of this policy. The institutes of higher learning and the literati who were CCP members or who accepted CCP leadership played an important role, especially at the beginning. Although there was certainly intended to be active involvement on the part of the peasantry and while they certainly did participate, it is less clear just what their involvement was in the decision-making process, and this question must unfortunately remain unanswered.[26]

With respect to funding for personnel, the teachers, students, and other literati working under instruction to create new _yangge_ plays, present model performances, and organise the movement were recipients of government support, albeit at the subsistence or near-subsistence level of all those supported on public funds at that time. Amateurs constituted a large proportion of the personnel involved. The material expenses were kept as low as possible. Performances were given in streets and open spaces. The new _yangge_ on contemporary themes about peasant life did not require special costumes -- the peasants could wear their own clothes. The members of most of the troupes received no wages and did not charge for performances. The small unavoidable expenses, such as oil for the lamps, might be provided by the government or by the village itself. In some cases the members of the troupes would do some extra work and use the money thereby earned to meet the needs of the troupe. In cases where the troupe performed for neighbouring villages, they might be given a small amount of money or a simple meal for the members of the troupe. Frugality was the guideline in cultural work as in all other work in the border regions and liberated areas.[27]

The yangge movement of the middle and late 1940s was aimed at the rural, predominantly peasant, population of the north China border regions or liberated areas. Later it was sent south, as the CCP armed forces moved southward, and there adapted to southern forms. After 1947, as the liberated areas expanded to include cities, new yangge were introduced to urban workers. These developments, however, were later ones based upon the rural northern experiences and will not be the focus of concern here. In the focus of attention in cultural work on the ordinary people in the northern bases, there were two main categories involved: the peasants and the soldiers (peasants in uniform). While soldiers were deeply involved in cultural work in this period, the yangge movement did not reach as deeply into the ranks as did other forms of entertainment or education. The specialised cultural units of the armed forces performed it and taught it to peasants throughout the country, but soldiers in regular units faced the obstacle of a lack of women. Yangge required women performers or men performers in female garb. The former were not available and the latter were no longer acceptable. Further, soldiers were encouraged to perform items about their military life but there were no women in the fighting units. One way out of this problem was the performance of items about their relations with civilians. Also, the yangge dance was thought to be insufficiently heroic, although some adaptations were carried out to deal with that problem. In any event, yangge did not become as significant for the soldiers as it was for the peasants.

The style of dramatics which resulted in the greatest involvement by the peasants was one which called upon them to become involved on a mass scale in particular dramatic events rather than to join organised troupes. One way in which this was done was to dramatise recent local events and have the actual participants play themselves on stage. This method also reduced problems involved in writing and acting possibly unfamiliar material, as would be the case with conventional scripts. Another way of involving large numbers of people was the use of the yangge dance. While yangge plays involved limited numbers of actors, the yangge dance could flexibly accommodate an indefinite number of people and was not difficult to learn. Even with the use of rural drama troupes, it was not considered sufficient to merely involve the limited number of people required by a troupe. Aside from the few more experienced or talented people required to form a core group for the village troupes, other villagers were to be widely involved on a less demanding scale wherever possible. The village troupes were to at least some extent envisaged as relatively open organisations disposed towards having the broadest based participation possible.[28]

However, while the activities were to be open to mass involvement, organisation was also necessary in order to carry out an effective mass movement. The primary organisation for mass cultural activity in the countryside at this time appears to have been the village drama troupes (nongcun jutuan). These were village troupes composed of local people doing dramatics in their spare time, largely during the winter off-season when there was more time available for non-agricultural activities. Some of these troupes performed throughout the year, but with greater frequency during the winter and with a peak of activity at the spring festival.[29]

In the course of organising these troupes, it was necessary to find people who were prepared to take some initiative at the beginning. This was easier after agrarian reform had made some progress and in areas where it was going well. One method of promoting the drama movement was to rely on people who had already been mobilised in response to some other issue, such as the war or increasing production; the militia and labour heroes were consequently called on to be active in dramatics.[30]

The people most usually involved in these troupes were young men; older men had family demands on their time, and women were less likely to be active as drama in general and yangge in particular were not considered respectable. Some places had some success in organising women to participate as well. There is at least one report of an area where dramatic activity came to a halt when too many of the young men left to join the army, but was revived by persuading women and children to take their place. Persuading women to join in these activities not only broadened the movement but, at the same time, helped to release women from the traditional restrictions placed upon them.[31]

It is difficult to estimate the number of people involved, and I am aware of no statistics on this question. The geographical distribution is an important limiting factor. The movement only took place in areas where the CCP had established border regions or liberated areas. Areas on the fringe or where military retreat had caused the villages to change hands were surely not in the forefront of cultural developments. Those areas which were under CCP administration from an earlier date and which enjoyed a more stable military situation had a greater degree of cultural activity. There were also regional variations resulting from other causes, such as the quality of local leadership. Some reports indicate that the movement succeeded in reaching a large proportion of the peasantry in the border regions and liberated areas. In areas where the movement was comparatively successful, every village had an amateur drama troupe.[32] Given the size of the population involved, it can be assumed that the people reached by this movement numbered in the several millions, even before it spread southward and into the cities.

The incentives involved seem to have been minimal and to have been focused more on encouraging the best troupes, although this would have an impact on other troupes as well in encouraging them to improve. An effort was made to increase the prestige of drama, which was traditionally looked down upon, and to give particular recognition to those troupes that were especially successful. One method of doing this was to have officials join in drama activities, for example, having the local district head or district CCP secretary take the lead in _yangge_ dances. Another method was that of holding competitions and awarding prizes to the better troupes. Prestige was also increased by the publication of some of the more successful works.[33]

There were considerable numbers of traditional folk artists in these areas practising the various folk arts, such as local opera, storytelling, and music. They were encouraged to join in the new cultural activities, including the _yangge_ movement, because their skills as folk artists were highly valued, and because they had an influence upon the peasantry. They do not seem to have been involved in the amateur organisations in the countryside, and, in fact, may have been quite the opposite of supportive. If the amateur troupes performed free or at nominal cost, who would hire the professional or semi-professional troupes -- even if they were better performers? Not only was the peasantry exceedingly poor, so were the folk artists. In their precarious economic situation, the financial threat posed by the yangge movement may have been very distressing. The opposition of the CCP to some aspects of the folk arts had a negative effect on the livelihood of some folk artists. While the CCP encouraged the folk artists to perform new or revised items, the prospects of making a living with the new repertoire were uncertain.[34]

On the other hand, the CCP also had something to offer the folk artists. In their poverty they were receptive to the economic changes brought by the CCP. One report, for example, indicates that the folk artists became much more favourably disposed toward the new administration after receiving land in the land reform of the late 1940's.[35] The new authorities also won some goodwill among the folk artists by treating them with respect, something which their low social status meant was unprecedented.[36]

The folk artists were reached by urban literati sent to the countryside as initiators of the movement. They would work with existing organisations, such as drama troupes, where they existed; gather individual artists, such as storytellers, together into new organisations; or reach scattered individuals through running short training courses.[37]

The first step in the process of reform of the folk artists was ideological and political reform. The artists would be encouraged to talk about their past sufferings and to recognise their common cause with the peasants and other working people. Then they would attend political study classes and criticise their past failings, blaming these on the old society. The policy of making literature and art serve the masses would be explained to them.[38] The second step was the reform of folk art, revising the old repertoire and creating new items in a reformed folk style.[39]

These two processes of ideological and artistic reform were both long-term undertakings. Ideological reform was recognised as being inherently slow. Artistic reform also required time, and after the new direction was set, there was still the problem of raising the artistic standard.[40] It appears that this period saw only a beginning in the work to reform folk artists and folk art. There are indications that the results were uneven.[41] Where there was some success, this troupe or individual was then presented as a model for other folk artists to emulate.[42]

The activity of the literati from outside the folk milieu was crucial in the development of this movement in folk performing arts, contradictory as that may seem.

The strong progressive trend among twentieth century Chinese intellectuals, including those involved in the arts, had led many of them to turn their attention to the common people of the country, despite the huge gap existing between the literati and the rest of the population. At first this represented more an interest or ideal, but with the Japanese occupation of the major cities, they began to bridge that gap. Fleeing the Japanese, large numbers of them fled inland, and as the CCP seemed more committed to fighting the Japanese than did the official government, nationalist as well as leftist literati flocked to the CCP border regions. Some of these people were figures of national renown in their fields; others had more ordinary credentials; and many were young middle school or university students. In the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ning-xia Border Region where the CCP centre, Yan'an, was located, there was an effort made to develop a cultural centre and to make that border region a model of the new society the CCP proposed to create in China. Substantial progress was made but the gap between the literati and the common people persisted. The rectification movement of 1942-1944 was partly concerned with this problem. Certainly the question of the relationship of intellectuals to the working people was fundamental not only to the cultural life of the whole country, but also to the future of the revolution. In Mao's address to writers and artists in 1942, he stated his view on what should be done, and this became CCP policy;

> China's revolutionary writers and artists, writers and artists of promise, must go among the masses; they must for a long period of time unreservedly go among the masses of workers, peasants, and soldiers body and soul, go into the heat of the struggle, go to the only source, the broadest and richest source, in order to observe, experience, study, and analyse all the different kinds of people, all the classes, all the masses, all the vivid patterns of life and struggle, all the natural forms of literature and art. Only then can they enter the process of re-working, that is, the process of creation, in this way unite the raw materials with production, and the study

> process with the creative process. Otherwise, you will have nothing to work with, no raw materials or semi-finished products, no wherewithal to re-work, and you will be nothing but a phoney writer or artist....[43]

Mao also advocated that the writers and artists study in order to reform their thought and attitudes, and this was the first stage of their reform as they participated in the widespread study of the rectification movement then underway. Mao placed great value on such ideological reform, but also approached the problem from a materialist angle, uniting both aspects according to dialectical materialism. Briefly put, the idea was that if ideology (and art) were derived from a material base, then, a fundamental change in ideology (and art) was to be derived from a change in the material base. By first uniting the genteel writers and artists with the workers, peasants and soldiers in the process of creating a new China, the objective conditions would be created for the emergence of a correspondingly new literature and art.

After an initial period of study, writers and artists began leaving Yan'an for the countryside on a large scale in 1943. While it was hoped that they would eventually re-work these experiences into works of art, they were not intended to just go to the countryside to collect material and do creative work. In order to help them look at life from a different point of view and achieve the desired transformation, they were sent to work in the countryside, largely as government cadres. Some, in particular the performers, were sent to act as organisers of mass cultural activities, such as the _yangge_ movement.

The contribution of these literati was crucial. It was they who carried the new policy on cultural work and the CCP depended heavily upon them for introducing it to the peasants and folk artists. The folk artists were essential because they had the needed artistic skills: while the literati might be quite accomplished in their fields, they were inexperienced when it came to folk art. The peasants, of course, were the ultimate target of this movement, not only as audience but as active creators of their own culture.

The number of literati engaged in this work compared with the size of the population to be reached meant that they were sparsely distributed. Their role was to act as catalyst, to set in motion the yangge movement and other mass cultural activities on the part of the peasants and folk artists -- and not to act in their place. They performed model works as examples of what was desired, assisted in collective writing groups, and ran short training programs, as well as producing many new yangge scripts.

As mentioned above, a wide range of folk forms were utilised in the mass cultural activities organised at this time, with the emphasis on the performing arts. Folksong, local opera, storytelling, and, above all, yangge were important elements in this situation. However, all these forms were undergoing changes in both the content presented and the forms in which this new content was contained. This was entirely intentional on the part of the organisers of these activities, and one reason for the dominance of yangge at this time was the fact that it was undergoing some quite promising changes in its artistic form. Since this was fundamental to the yangge movement, it merits some attention here.

The new _yangge_ developed and promoted during the _yangge_ movement of the 1940s was a combination of the old _yangge_ and of Western-style spoken drama. The result of this combination was sometimes also given a new name: _geju_, or musical, to indicate that it was actually a new form. The reason for this combination lay in the different strengths of the two forms. _Yangge_ was traditionally popular and there would be no difficulty finding audiences for _yangge_ performances. The familiarity of the form also had advantages for amateurs. The strength of spoken drama was that it provided a body of knowledge and experience on structure and technique for political theatre, having long been used for this purpose. Further, the majority of the drama troupes involved in the initial efforts to create this new form in the mid-1940s were troupes performing spoken drama. This meant that, with or without conscious intent, elements of spoken drama were drawn upon by the actors in their performances. It also meant that there were some difficulties involved in having such actors perform even reformed _yangge_.[44]

Without going into detail, a few of the changes made should be indicated. The previously loosely structured dramatic style was tightened in order to provide a more effective vehicle for the presentation and development of political themes.[45] The sexual connotations in the dancing were removed by altering the dancing styles. The costumes were altered in accordance with changes in the characters portrayed -- clowns and monks, for example, were removed and workers, peasants, and soldiers added. A concession was made here, however, in allowing some bright colours and stylistic decoration, as the result would otherwise have been quite drab. Extensive dialogue was introduced into what had previously been wholly musical content. The music was also altered somewhat.[46]

The consequence of these alterations in virtually all aspects of _yangge_ content and form was a fluid situation whose dominant characteristic was experimentation. New _yangge_ did not acquire a fixed form, nor were claims made that the process of reform of _yangge_ had been completed at any point, as far as I am aware. There was a continuing tension between the two dramatic traditions of old _yangge_ and spoken drama, and the works produced varied in leaning toward one or the other tradition.

Probably the most important and most effectively persuasive use of _yangge_ occured where large numbers of peasants were mobilised to perform themselves. This was actively encouraged. Even where the number of peasant participants might be limited in number, as was the case with the village drama troupes, their activities often depended on community support in the form of financial help in order to cover expenses, or in the form of practical assistance by carrying the materials to the performance site and arranging the performance area. Professional performers were limited in number, so dramatic activity clearly depended to a large extent on the villagers themselves, as was traditionally the case as well. Political speeches or discussions might accompany the performances, but this was not always the case, and it is difficult to estimate how common this practice was.

As a final note on this topic, the following passage from the "Decision on the Development of Mass Art" of 16 November 1944 by a conference on culture and education work in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region clearly indicates the view of the organisers of this movement on the question of which forms to use:

> The newness or oldness of art is basically decided by whether or not it serves the interests of the masses, whether or not it serves the masses in war, in production, and in education. Therefore, all art which is able to correctly show the new life (and history in new perspective) can be developed; other art must all be reformed. In the same way, all the forms which are able to correctly show the new content can be developed; others must all be reformed.[47]

It is difficult to be comprehensive about indicating the content of the new _yangge_ since so many of them, and especially those created by the peasants themselves in the villages, were never written down, not to speak of being published and preserved decades later. There are some indications, however, which are worth referring to. In writing of the 1944 spring festival performance in Yan'an, Zhou Yang summarised the themes of fifty-six new _yangge_. Twenty-six of them were about production in one way or another: mutual aid, labour heroes, the reform of loafers, production in the army, and factory production. Seventeen were about relations between the army and the people. Ten were about self-defense and protection against traitors. Two were about struggle behind the enemy lines. One was about the movement to reduce rent and interest.[48] A later collection of _yangge_ plays, including ones written at slightly earlier and later dates, shows a similar pattern. This volume seems to be a selection of the best of the new _yangge_ and to consist entirely or almost entirely of _yangge_ written by the literati. It also consists mostly of plays on production and on relations between the army and the people. There are also individual plays in this collection on other topics: literacy, arranged marriage, the CCP's policy of uniting with middle peasants, bad conditions in the Nationalist army, traitors, and the CCP policy of uniting with the national bourgeoisie.[49] Two other slender volumes of yangge consist of yangge about army life or army-civilian relations (five short plays in one volume) and more varied plays in another volume, including several produced by amateur groups. This included one yangge on each of: military affairs, rent reduction, cooperative commerce, fortune-telling, and catching enemy agents; and several on the status of women.[50] The two most popular full-length new yangge, The White-haired Girl and Xie Lei Chou, were general indictments of life before liberation by the CCP and praise of that liberation.[51]

The primary force behind yangge with content of this description (old, unreformed yangge continued to exist as well) was the CCP. The decisions which created the CCP cultural policy of this time were made by the top leadership of the CCP, but it should be kept in mind that this was a period in which the CCP was moving away from a secret Leninist style of organisation toward a more open style based on the "mass line" approach, and also that many political activists among the peasantry were CCP members. Therefore, while the initiative for this policy came from outside the peasant community, it was not entirely external.

Since a considerable proportion of the plays were local amateur productions, the peasantry was involved in the process of dramatic creation. In some cases, for example, where people were acting out their own stories in dramatisations of real events, large numbers of people were involved and the content was determined by recent historical events. In other cases, a small core group doing writing collectively was found to be a satisfactory approach. Such a group provided an organisational centre and led the way in local playwriting. Wider participation was not ruled out by the formation of such a core group, as other people were also called on and revisions were done in response to opinions and criticisms presented by the audiences.[52]

The process of collective playwriting varied, largely depending on who was involved. Literati and folk artists used this method, but, in the interests of brevity, peasants will be the subject of discussion here. They were encouraged to create plays collectively, not only because cooperation was valued above individualism, but also because this method brought together people with different abilities, served as a practical means of training the less experienced, and could easily incorporate political leaders in the process. Another important factor was that it allowed for the use of literate people as scribes or as more active participants, but did not restrict playwriting to that narrow sector of the rural population. When the literati circulating in the countryside to promote the cultural movement were available, they might participate. Political cadres sometimes joined the writing groups and sometimes exerted influence from outside: providing political guidance or indicating what issues might be suitable topics for dramatisation. The works produced required approval in terms of their political content.[53]

The form collective playwriting took was highly variable, so it is difficult to generalise. Here one example will be presented, one described with approval in the late 1940s. In this village drama troupe the theme would first be set by the cadres (political leaders), and then material would be collected, after which members of the troupe would discuss the characters and plot. Following that, a writing group would produce a draft, which would then be discussed and revised by the cadres and all the members of the troupe before being accepted. After performance of a particular play had begun, the troupe would seek out the opinions and criticisms of their audiences and do further revisions indefinitely.[54]

It may be hypothetically suggested that local dramatic groups may have had more independence in terms of what was to be selected as the topic than in terms of what was to be said about it. While the object was to promote CCP policy, troupes may have had some latitude in terms of which policy or issue to select. There may, however, have been pressure to select whatever issue was then of most pressing importance. Whatever the topic, the message would have to correctly portray and support CCP policy.

In terms of the local leadership, they had, of course, undergone a recent transformation. The new leadership of progressive peasant activists was involved, but the old leadership of the landlords was not.

There were also indirect pressures exerted by the community at large. Where the goal was to win the support of the rural population and where the traditional folk culture still existed in competition with the new, the new yangge movement could not ignore public opinion. This is shown most clearly in the effort to portray the new policies as promoting a harmonious family life, while at the same time advocating the freeing of women from their lowly status in the patriarchal family. The presentation of policy was affected by the limits of what was acceptable to the peasants at that time.

The question of follow-up to yangge performances does not generally arise. The one case in which it would seem to be relevant is that of a performance given in an area where the yangge movement had not yet begun, and the subsequent action would be the organisation of yangge in that locality. In terms of following up on the activity recommended in specific yangge within the context of the rural yangge movement, a few points are worth noting. Yangge was far from being the only channel for the communication of such ideas as the desirability of supporting the war effort against the Japanese, increasing agricultural production, establishing cooperative enterprises, and so on. Yangge as a propaganda medium was meshed into a complex network of political mobilisation. Yangge itself might even be viewed as follow-up to messages conveyed more conventionally in speeches at meetings. While yangge plays provide some information and carry on some direct persuasion in favour of specific messages, much of its influence seems to have been less directly related to information per se. New yangge plays portrayed typical peasant characters putting into practice the recommended behaviour and consequently enjoying higher living standards, safety from enemy attacks, and other beneficial effects. Yangge transformed what might otherwise have been abstract recommendations into behaviour easily imaginable and desirable within the context of village life. Yangge plays on a topic might happen either before some specific activity was undertaken or while it was in process; in either case it reinforced other measures being taken simultaneously and aimed at the same result. In this respect it differs markedly from a situation in which drama is the main or sole channel for conveying a message and mobilising people to act in some recommended way.

Evaluations of the yangge movement are unfortunately scanty. If usual CCP practice were followed, as was probably the case, such evaluations were done. The problem lies in the accessibility of such evaluations. There are two evaluations of which I am aware, referring to two different regions, both done in the late 1940s after some years of experience in this sphere. Neither is limited solely to the yangge movement.

In 1947 a forum on literature and art convened by the Shaanxi-Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei Border Region Central Bureau summed up the experience of the rural dramatics movement in the preceding few years and indicated its future direction. The forum produced a decision on future cultural work in the countryside which was based on what were seen to have been the positive and successful elements in past practice. The approach of orienting cultural work toward the workers, peasants, and soldiers was confirmed and so, too, was the basic method of realising that approach: getting the masses involved in collective writing. The decision pointed out some desirable features for the rural dramatics movement: to have close ties with the masses, to do propaganda in relation to the central issues of the time, and to be frugal. The drama troupes were instructed to be sure to let involvement in drama be entirely voluntary, and to draw a wide range of people into a united front in cultural work, especially the traditional folk artists.[55]

That summary was based on experience in one of the older base areas. Another summary referring to the situation in an area that came under CCP administration at a later date, the Northeast, reported its situation in mass cultural work in a more pessimistic tone, stating that in the three years from 1946 to 1949, they had not been able to link the professionals and the masses successfully, and that its mass cultural work was therefore much weaker than that of the older base areas. Poor leadership was seen as the source of this problem, in failing to lead the development of mass cultural activities in the countryside and in failing to demand that the professionals make a priority of helping the amateurs.[56]

In addition, there are indications of some difficulties in organising mass participation in playwriting. One important obstacle in the path of this activity was the lack of confidence on the part of the cadres in the capabilities of the local amateurs. This acted as a brake on their enthusiasm for organising such activity -- and it was largely the cadres who were expected to provide leadership in this work. The amateurs, for their part, also lacked confidence in their own abilities and often had to be encouraged to take up writing. To make it easier for them to do so, they were advised to dramatise true stories and real characters rather than create fictional stories and characters, to write short, simple items, and to use folk forms with which they were familiar. Another major difficulty was the low level of political understanding of many of the amateurs. Since they were supposed to be creating agitprop, this was a serious obstacle. The involvement of cadres in the playwriting process was one measure designed to overcome this difficulty. There was also an effort to provide the amateurs with political education.[57]

The accomplishments of the yangge movement and of other mass cultural activities underway at the same time are marked and have a significant place in the development of the cultural life of the Chinese people. These accomplishments, while uneven, were sufficient to demonstrate the viability of the new cultural policy being promoted. Most importantly, it was demonstrated that the traditional folk performing forms could (when reformed) serve as a vehicle for political messages and that the peasantry could be mobilised for amateur dramatics, including those of a political nature.

Certainly the cultural life of the rural population was enriched and broadened in those areas where the yangge movement was developed successfully. To evaluate the effect of the yangge movement on the political and economic aspects of peasant life is more difficult. There were a number of different forces working in the same direction with respect to changing the situation in China. To single out the impact of this one factor does not seem possible. Evaluating the desirability or otherwise of these changes is largely a matter of the position of the observer: the poorer sectors of the peasantry benefitted,while the landlords were adversely affected.

The impact of the yangge movement on the folk artists is a complex question. They shared generally in the same effects as the rest of the rural population, but also experienced a specific effect upon their profession. There is insufficient data for comment on this issue.

The impact on the literati was also complex. While their livelihood was taken care of officially while they worked on the yanggo movement, there were hardships involved in living in the countryside at that time to which those from privileged backgrounds were not accustomed. In order to do this work, they had to put aside their own creative work and take on the new and difficult tasks involved in developing an amateur movement in the countryside. Their participation certainly involved some degree of sacrifice. The results of their involvement were mixed: in terms of the amateur movement itself, they played an important and probably indispensable role; in terms of the transformation hoped for in their own minds and in terms of the goal of finally bridging the gap between intellectuals and working people, success was much more limited. While that transformation had been seen as one requiring some time, even at the beginning, it has turned out to be much more difficult than was foreseen and continues to be a problem at present.

Some caution is necessary in considering what aspects of the Chinese experience described above could be usefully transferred to a different social situation. The role of the Chinese Communist Party was pivotal for all that has been described. While some of the measures promoted in new yangge were matters of basic economic development -- putting more wasteland under cultivation, expanding handicraft production, and so on -- they were mixed with and dominated by questions of political change. If the economic situation of the Chinese people were to be fundamentally changed, then a revolution was needed. The Chinese experience would seem to have more relevance to areas where revolutionary activities are in progress and led by an organisation which places a value on cultural work among the common people.

With that qualification, a few points might be usefully made:

Even those traditional folk forms of performing arts (such as yangge) which seem least suitable for mobilisation, can be successfully adapted for that purpose. In this context it might be kept in mind that traditional folk arts are not static and unchanging. The question is not whether to change them, but how, by whom, and for what purpose.

Intellectuals external to the social milieu in question can play a valuable role in cultural activities of this nature. The gap may be difficult to bridge but it is not impossible to bridge it at least partially. In China great emphasis has been put on having the intellectuals go into such communities with humility, a modest standard of living, and a willingness to learn from the peasants as well as to teach them. While such an approach is difficult to achieve, and has not always been accomplished in China, it has been shown to be very valuable.

The organisational method of yi dian dai mian, used by the Chinese in other spheres as well as the cultural, has proved very useful. The idea is simply that the most effective way of leading a whole area forward is to concentrate on one or a few points within that area. The concentration of effort at a few points means that difficulties there can be surmounted more easily than would be the case if resources were more dispersed. Mistakes made at these points can be identified and corrected before they adversely affect the whole area. In short, it is a method of first carrying out limited experiments, selecting the best results, and building upon them in the next stage wherein the movement spreads to the rest of the area. At that point, there are also the advantages of concrete examples to use in spreading the movement and a larger number of people experienced in carrying it out.

Connected with that method is the one of using models as a method of encouraging and guiding activities. This again is not unique in China to cultural activities. The development, identification, and promotion of models is important in the development of a movement. Models do not necessarily emerge spontaneously -- many are the product of intensive assistance, for example, as in the points of the preceding paragraph. Others may develop more spontaneously and become selected as models later. The status of model is one of prestige and the possibility of attaining that status may act as an encouragement to others. The use of models in developing a movement is valuable in providing concrete examples of exactly what is being advocated.

In terms of involvement, the flexible organisational structure described above seems very useful. On the one hand, an organisational core is necessary in order to have a continuing movement rather than merely occasional bursts of activity. On the other hand, the widest possible involvement is also desirable. Structured but open amateur groups seem to be a suitable structure for village cultural activity.

The involvement of large numbers of people may be effectively prompted by the dramatisation of some recent significant event in which many people were involved. In China at that time, the land reform struggles against landlords were used in this way. The actual participants in the real events may be asked to portray themselves in such dramatisations, drawing in people who would otherwise not have become performers.

Folk artists are highly desirable participants in cultural activities. Even in China in the situation of large-scale reform of the folk arts, the skills of the folk artists were considered indispensable. Some problems, such as a lack of understanding of the issues to be portrayed in new works or a conservative approach to art, may be resolved by having them work together with people able to contribute on that level although lacking skill in the folk arts. Such co-operation may be very delicate and difficult to arrange successfully, however, and should be approached with caution. The non-folk artists involved should take care to be respectful and not to expect immediate results.

Financing is a difficult problem for programs such as these, where most of the people involved are poverty-stricken and external funds are limited. The Chinese approach was to emphasise frugality foremost. In the case described in this paper, information about funding is not available, but the picture which strongly emerges from the data that are available indicates that most of the funds went into the support (at subsistence level) of a limited number of professionals who provided the essential services of creating new _yangge_ plays and giving model performances in order to spread the _yangge_ movement. The amateurs themselves received little or, in many cases, no financial support at all from official sources. This was the product of necessity but may also have been beneficial in promoting self-reliance and in creating a movement independent of direct official funding.

A final comment on the question of transfer is to point briefly to China's experience in this regard. Unfortunately, that topic is too far-reaching to be discussed adequately here. Still, it is worth pointing out that China had borrowed a great deal in the cultural realm from foreign countries during the early part of the century -- including much of a progressive nature. For example, agitprop methods used in the Soviet Union were transferred to China. Such transfer was valuable to some degree, but also proved to be only partially suitable to the Chinese situation. One reason for the marked success of the _yangge_ movement was that it took place after this cultural borrowing had been digested and united with indigenous cultural traditions.

By way of postscript, readers may wish to note that _yangge_ faded in importance after 1941, but that the _geju_ form derived from it has persisted, and that _yangge_ seems to be having a resurgence at present. The successes of the _yangge_ movement have had a less direct but very important effect in contributing to the approach of reforming traditional folk media in China for contemporary purposes.

NOTES

1. The research upon which this paper is based was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

2. Mao Zedong, Where Do Correct Ideas Come From? (Peking: Foreign Languages Press).

3. Precise figures are unavailable, but estimates indicate the following approximate figures: 1700: 150,000,000; 1794: 313,000,000; 1850: 400,000,000; 1953: 583,000,000. The period of most rapid increase seems to have been 1750-1850 but although the rate later slowed, the absolute numbers were by then very large. From the last quarter of the eighteenth century, increasing population was associated with a drop in living standards. See: Ho Ping-ti, Studies on the Population of China 1368-1953 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press 1959).

4. The Han people constitute about 95% of the population of China. There are over fifty other ethnic groups, each with its own distinctive culture. The constraints of this paper and the fact that the developments which are the topic of this paper took place among the Han people mean that the other ethnic groups and their cultures will not be discussed here.

5. Two valuable and readily available sources on traditional Chinese drama which interested persons may wish to consult are: William Dolby, A History of Chinese Drama (London: Paul Elek, 1976); and Colin Mackerras, The Chinese Theatre in Modern Times: From 1840 to the Present Day (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975).

6. Huang Zhigang, Cong Yangge Dao Difang Xi (Shanghai: Zhonghua Shuju, 1951), p. 81-82.

7. Ibid., p. 72.

8. Ibid., p. 72-76; Zhang Geng, Yangge yu Xin Geju (Dalian: Dazhong Shudian, 1949), p. 4; and Clarence Moy, "Communist China's Use of the Yang-ko", Papers on China (Harvard), 6 (1952), p. 112-114.

9. Holm, p. 1, 14; and Moy, p. 116-118.
A large number of Dingxian yangge have been translated into English and published together with a useful introduction as: Sidney D. Gamble, ed., Chinese Village Plays from the Ting Hsien Region (Amsterdam: Philo, 1970).

10. Zhou Erfu, Xin di Qidian (Shanghai: Qunyi, 1949), p. 62-63; and David Holm, "Introduction to Ma K'o's 'Man and Wife Learn to Read'", Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, 8, no. 2 (April-June 1976), p. 3.

11. Dolby, p. 227.

12. Zhang Geng, p. 5-8; and Holm, p. 3.

13. Gamble, p. xvii-xx.

14. Zhou Erfu, "Renmin Wenhua di Shidai" in: Mao Zedong et al., *Kaizhan Da Guimo di Qunzhong Wenjiao Yundong* (Hong Kong: Zhongguo, 1947), p. 57-59.

15. In: Mao Tse-tung, *On Literature and Art* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), p. 1-43. This document is also available from the Foreign Languages Press in a separate pamphlet and in Mao's *Selected Works* in numerous foreign languages. The definitive Chinese edition, which differs somewhat from the revised official version, is contained in Mao Zedong, *Mao Zedong Ji*, ed. Yichiyama Tosho, 8 (Tokyo: Chugugoku Kyosan Shugi Kenkyu Shokumi, 1981), p. 111-148.

On *Literature and Art* also contains a number of other important policy statements relating to literature and art dating from the 1940's as well as other periods.

16. *Mao Zedong Ji*, 8, p. 111-112. This translation and others in this paper follow the official translation, except for a few corrections in accordance with the original text.

17. Ma Jianling, "Wo duiyu Difang Ju di Kanfa" in *Zhonghua Quanguo Wenxue Yishu Gongzuozhe Daibiao Dahui Jinian Wenji*, ed. Zhonghua Quanguo Wenxue Yishu Gongzuozhe Daibiao Dahui Xuanchuanchu (n. p.: n. pub., 1950), p. 480.

18. Zhang Geng, "Jiefangqu di Xiju" in: *Zhongguo Xiandai Wenxueshi Cankao Ziliao*, 2, p. 137.

19. Zhou Erfu, *Xin di Qidian*, p. 64-66; and Gu Yewen, *Yangge yu Yaogu* Shanghai: Wenyu, 1949), p. 28.

20. Ibid., p. 27; Zhou Erfu, p. 63-64; and *Zhongguo Xiandai Wenyi Sixiang Douzheng Shi*, ed. Fudan Daxue Zhongwen Xi 1957 Ji Wenxuezu Xuesheng (Shanghai: Shanghai Wenyi, 1960), p. 351.

21. Zhou Erfu, p. 57-60; and Zhang Geng, Yangge yu Xin Geju, p. 10.

22. Wang Dahua, Li Bo, Lu You, and An Po, *Xiong Mei Kai* Huang in: *Yangge Ju Xuan*, ed. Zhang Geng (Peking: Renmin Wenxue, 1977). A brief summary of this play's plot in English can be found in: Moy, p. 132.

22. continued

Ai Siqi, "Cong Chunjie Xuanchuan Kan Wenyi di Xin Fangxiang" in Ai Siqi et al., Yangge Lunwen Xuanji (n. p.: Xinhua Shudian, 1944); and Jin Ziguang, "Zai Yan'an Bien Yan Bi Shang Liangshan di Jingyan," Xiju Luncong, 2 (1958), p. 153.

23. Zhang Geng, p. 16-17.

24. Zhou Erfu, "Renmin Wenhua di Shidai," p. 53, 55, 58-59; Li Huaizhi, "Hong Taiyang Zhaoliang Qiaoergou," Wenyi Luncong, 1 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin, 1977), p. 37: and Holm, "The Yangge Movement," p. 1,6.

25. The text of this document, "Zhonggong Zhongyang Xuanchuanbu Guanyu Zhixing Dang di Wenyi Zhengce di Jueding," is contained in Zhongguo Xiandai Wenxueshi Cankao Ziliao, 2, p. 26-28.

26. On the CCP's idea of how it should relate to the people, as expressed in its idea of "mass line," see: Mao Zedong, "Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership," Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, 3 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965).

27. Mu Zhi, "Qunzhong Fanshen. Zi Chang Zi Yue," p. 8-9; Bi Fu, "Daopengan Nongcun Jutuan di Jingyan," p. 65, 68; Xia Qing, "'Bu Kang Qiang di Duiwu'", p. 71; Hua Han, "Jieshao Wuxiang Dongbaocun Jiefang Jutuan," p. 80; and "Taihang San Zhuan Shu Guanyu Nongcun Jutuan di Zhishi," p. 36 -- all in: Nongcun Xin Wenyi undong di Kaizhan, ed. Huang Mei (Wuhan: Wuhan Renmin Yishu, 1949); and Holm, p. 3.

28. Xia Qing, p. 72; Mu Zhi, p. 2, 5-6; Xia Qing, "1946 Nian Jincheng Chunjie Wenyu Yundong" in: Nongcun Xin Wenyi Yundong di Kaizhan, p. 38-39; Hua Han, p. 78; Bi Fu, p. 62-63; and Guo Qin'an, "Kan Qinyuanluyin Jutuan Yan 'Wa Qiong Gen' 'Li Lai Cheng Jiating' Ju Hou Gan" in: Nongcun Xin Wenyi Yundong di Kaizhan, p. 101.

29. Zhou Yang, "Xin di Renmin di Wenyi" in: Zhongguo Xiandai Wenxueshi Cankao Ziliao, 2, p. 114; Bi Fu, p. 65; and Mu Zhi, p. 2.

30. Ya Ma, "Guanyu Xiju Yundong di San Ti" in: Dazhong Wenyi di Lilun he Shiyan, ed. Huazhong Wenhua Xiehui (n. p.: Huazhong Xinhua Shudian, 1946), p. 118-121.

31. Zhang Qingling, p. 183, 187: and Wang Yu, Zenyang Kaizhan Nongcun Wenyu Yundong (Shanghai: Xinhua Shudian Huadong Zong Fendian, 1950), p. 7, 63.

32. Qi Wu, *Yige Geming Genjudi di Chengzhang* (Peking: Renmin, 1958), p. 232; Zhou Yang, p. 114; Zhang Geng, "Jiefangqu di Xiju," p. 138; Zhang Qingling, p. 182; Mu Zhi, p. 1; Xia Qing, p. 38; [illegible] Jiang Chaozhong, *Jiefangqu Wenyi Gaishu (1941-1947)* (Tianjin: Baihua Wenyi, 1958), p. 60-63.

33. Xia Qing, p. 43; Hua Han, p. 76, 78; and Sha Kefu, "Huabei Nongcun Xiju Yundong he Minjian Yishu Gaizao Gongzuo" in: *Zhongguo Xiandai Wenxueshi Cankao Ziliao*, 2, p. 156.

34. Shu Yu, "Jieshao Liu Jintang di Gushidui" in: *Nongcun Xin Wenyi Yundong di Kaizhan*, p. 115; Zi Qin, "Jiu Yiren di Sixiang Gaizao" in the same volume, p. 124; and Wang Yu, p. 75.

35. Zi Qin, p. 125.

36. Xia Qing, "'Bu Kang Qiang di Duiwu'", p. 69; and Wang Yaping, "Gaizao Minjian Yiren he Minjian Yishu di Jidian Yijian" in: *Nongcun Xin Wenyi Yundong di Kaizhan*, p. 24.

37. Ibid., p. 25; Bi Fu, "Jiu Yiren Chengliao Xin Yiren" in: *Nongcun Xin Wenyi Yundong di Kaizhan*, p. 128-135; Sha Kefu, p. 159-160; Shu Yu, passim; Lin Shan, "Lue Tan Shanbei di Gaizao Shuoshu" in" *Zhonghua Quanguo Wenxue Yishu Gongzuozhe Daibiao Dahui Jinian Wenji*, p. 495-496; Wang Yu, p. 74-75; and Wang Yaping, "Yiren di Chuangzao he Yanchang" in: *Nongcun Xin Wenyi Yundong di Kaizhan*, p. 119.

38. Sha Kefu, p. 158; Zhou Erfu, p. 60; and Wang Yaping, "Gaizao Minjian Yiren he Minjian Yishu di Jidian Yijian", p. 24.

39. Bi Fu, p. 130; and Sha Kefu, p. 158-162.

40. Sha Kefu, p. 159; and Wang Yaping, p. 25.

41. Sha Kefu, p. 157; and Qi Wu, p. 235-236.

42. Wang Yu, p. 90; and Lin Shan, p. 494-497.

43. *Mao Zedong Ji*, 8, p. 127.

44. Wang Yao, *Zhongguo Xin Wenxue Shi Gao*, 2 (Shanghai: Xin Wenyi, 1953), p. 367, 390; Dolby, p. 215; Holm, p.2; and Zhang Geng, *Yangge yu Xin Geju*, p. 13-14.

45. Ibid., p. 14; Zhou Erfu, *Xin di Qidian*, p. 66-67; and Zhou Yang, "Biaoxian Xin di Qunzhong di Shidai" in: *Dazhong Wenyi di Lilun he Shiyan*, p. 19.

46. For more information on these changes, see: Zhou Yang; and Zhang Geng.

47. This decision is contained in: Mao Zedong et al., p. 78.

48. Zhou Yang, p. 13. The impression given is that these fifty-six plays may have represented all or nearly all the yangge plays performed in Yan'an at that time, but this is not explicitly stated.

49. Yangge Ju Xuan, ed. Zhang Geng (Peking: Zhongguo Xiju, 1962). The item in this volume on literacy, which is one of the best, is fortunately available in English translation: Ma Ke, "Man and Wife Learn to Read", trans. David Holm, Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, 8, no. 2 (1976), p. 5-12.

50. Yangge Ju Xuanji, 2-3, ed. Zhang Geng (Guimusi: Dongbei Shudian, 1947).

51. He Jingzhi and Ding Yi, The White-haired Girl in: Modern Drama from Communist China, ed. Walter J. Meserve and Ruth I. Meserve (New York: New York University, 1970).

    Ma Jianling, Yan Yiyan, Duan Muyan, Huang Zhun, Li Ning, Chen Guang, and Li Chao, Xie Lei Chou (n. p.: Huazhong Xinhua Shudian, 1949).

    There are also brief English summaries of the plots of several yangge in Moy, p. 132-138, 141-145.

52. Wang Yu, p. 51, 58.

53. Ibid., p. 52-53, 59, 65-66; and [illegible] Zhi, p. 4-5; Sha Kefu, p. 154; and Xia Qing, p. 71.

54. Hua Han, p. 80.

55. Sha Kefu, p. 157.

56. Liu Zhiming, "Dongbei San Nian Lai Wenyi Gongzuo Chubu Zongjie" in: Zhongguo Xiandai Wenxueshi Cankao Ziliao, 2, p. 171-172.

57. Wang Yu, p. 51, 56, 58, 66; and Xia Qing, "1946 Nian Jincheng Chunjie Wenyu Huodong", p. 43.

DOMESTICATION THEATRE AND CONSCIENTIZATION DRAMA IN INDIA*

by

ROSS KIDD

This paper examines three Indian experiences in didactic or social animation theatre - a) the Song and Drama Division (SDD) of the Government of India, b) Jagran, a Delhi-based non-government agency specializing in development communication through mime and c) Action for Cultural and Political Change (ACPC), an animation team in southern India involved in organizing popular movements of landless labourers. These organizations represent three different approaches to socially oriented theatre: a government-run, centrally controlled, mass approach involving itinerant performances by regionally hired troupes on government development themes and services; a locally based non-government programme involving mime sketches on government services and community self-help action performed by an externally based troupe for slum-dwellers; a popular organization approach run by and for oppressed groups in which drama is an integral part of a social transformation process involving conscientization, organization, and struggle.

Each of the above programmes will be described in its own terms and then, in the final section, a comparative analysis will be made. This will attempt to show that a) these programmes represent two different sets of interests and purposes - one a form of "domestication" or ideological manipulation, the other "liberation" or structural transformation and b) these two sets of interests are reflected in the historical origins, organizational structure, programme methods and processes, etc. of each programme.

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* Sources for this study include those cited in the bibliography; interviews with Song and Drama Division staff (1978-81), Aloke Roy of Jagran (1980-81), and ACPC team members (1980-81); and observations of Jagran and ACPC field programmes. I am indebted to Dr. Felix Sugirtharaj (ACPC) and Evelyn Voigt for their help on the ACPC and SDD case studies respectively; their weaknesses, however, are my own responsibility.

In the opening section the historical and political-economic context in which the programmes were shaped will be briefly set out.

Political-Economic Context

At Independence in 1947 political power was transferred to the indigenous bureaucratic and capitalist classes but India remained within the sphere of influence of the advanced capitalist countries. India set out on a course of massive industrialization and agricultural transformation, all within the system of bourgeois property relations and with heavy doses of foreign aid (which expanded the enclave of foreign ownership inherited from the colonial period* and, in the case of the Soviet aid, provided the infrastructure for capitalist development.). The various rural development strategies used over the first three decades of Independence were all absorbed and distorted by India's class structure. The beneficiaries were the rich farmers and landlords who controlled the social, economic and political life of the village and appropriated state resources to strengthen themselves, all within the socialist and Ghandian rhetoric of rural uplift and alleviating poverty and unemployment.

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* Profits earned by branches of foreign companies and subsidiaries represent 40% of the profits of the entire private corporate sector. (Moulik, 1979, p.50)

During the 50's and early 60's the agricultural development strategy consisted of land reform, co-operatives and community development. The land reform programme eliminated some of the huge feudal estates but was highly unsuccessful in implementing the land-holding ceilings and redistributing the excess land. CD and co-ops also failed to achieve the social equity objectives: the richer farmers took control of these new structures (the village council or panchayat and co-op) and used them to increase their own economic and political power. The jobs, land, and other opportunities promised to the smaller and landless peasants never materialised. The assumption underlying the CD approach, ie. that all social classes in the village shared common interests and would benefit equally from collective projects was shown to be specious. Agricultural production remained fairly stagnant during this period due to the grain imports from the U.S.A. and other countries.

In the mid-60's when food surpluses in North America declined, a "Green Revolution" was launched with American backing to achieve food self-sufficiency (as part of the multi-national corporation strategy to shift agricultural production to the Third World where cheap labour could be exploited*). The new seeds, fertilizer, mechanization, etc. and the capitalist farming methods did raise productivity (and increase the markets for the multi-national corporations) but it also polarized the class structure - fattening and capitalizing the rich farmers, reducing the proportion of middle farmers, forcing the smaller farmers into debt, and producing massive landlessness, unemployment, and impoverishment. The rich farmers appropriated the spoils of this programme, consolidated their hold over the panchayat and their relations with the bureaucracy (as their means of monopolizing the state resources for the Green Revolution), and maintained their domination over and exploitation of the poor farmers and landless labourers.

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* This strategy was also defended as a means of staving off socialist revolution in the Third World.

In the 70's when the revolutionary implications of these changes became increasingly clear, the Indian government, again with the backing of the international aid apparatus, moved to contain the social unrest with a "mini-Green Revolution" including benefits directed to the smaller farmers and social welfare measures but no significant land reform (Feder, 1976). These mini-reforms and government services directed to the poor - the basis for Mrs. Ghandi's 20-point programme and slogan of eradicating poverty - were aimed at integrating the poor into the system, drawing them away from radical social action, and dealing with some of the contradictions and tensions produced by the capitalist "betting on the strong" strategies. This was coupled with more repressive measures in the mid-70's (the Emergency) in order to contain the growing tensions and class conflict more directly.

The role of development communication and non-formal education in this overall "integrated rural development" strategy was to promote the mini-reforms and services of the state and persuade people to accept reformist and government-controlled ways for dealing with their problematic existence - birth control pills, development loans, house sites, small economic projects, etc.

While the 20-point programme made lots of promises of eradicating poverty, the follow-through was rather hollow. The increasing remoteness, insensitivity, and inflexibility of the bureaucracy and their collusion with the landowning classes worked to prevent even most of these mini-reforms from being implemented. In response to the continuing failures of government-based development programmes and the disillusionment with Ghandian "change of heart" strategies (ie. attempts to persuade the landlords to be generous and just) and building on the growth of class consciousness in the countryside and urban slums a number of radical initiatives were started in various parts of the country to organize the marginal and small farmers and landless labourers to fight for what the system was not providing (ie. minimum wages, abolition of bonded labour and rural indebtedness, other government reforms and services, etc.) and to try to change the system itself (eg. the abolition of landlordism).

The Song and Drama Division (SDD) was created during the first development period (1947-1964), Jagran during the second (1965-1972), and ACPC during the third (1973-present). Each of these three programmes will now be described in turn, setting out for each a) the origins and history, b) the organizational structure, and c) the programme contents and process.

SONG AND DRAMA DIVISION (SDD)

Origin and History

The Indian Song and Drama Division (SDD) was created in 1954 as a specialist unit within the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for development communication through live entertainment media. Its primary initial task was to promote national unity and publicize government's development plans. The importance of popularizing the Five Year Plans (and using all available 'media') was recognized in the first plan (December 1952):

> A widespread understanding of the plan is an essential stage in its fulfillment.... An understanding of the priorities which govern the Plan will enable each person to relate his or her role to the larger purposes of the nation as a whole. The Plan has, therefore, to be carried into every home in the language and symbols of the people ... with the assistance of creative writers and artists, which has to be specially enlisted.... All available methods of communication have to be developed and the people approached through the written and spoken word no less than through radio, film, song and drama. (Quoted from Raghavan, 1979, p. 18).

The aim, then, was to promote awareness of and participation in government programmes of social reform and economic development. The Five Year Plans provided the themes: small savings, agricultural development, national integration, family planning and prohibition. The SDD was launched during the era of the "Great Campaigns" when the newly emerging Third World nations - China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Ghana, etc. - mounted "mass education" campaigns on agriculture, health, literacy, civic education, etc. (Schramm, 1966). Media was seen as playing a mobilizing role in arousing the participation of the rural masses in the reconstruction and development efforts of government.

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The choice of the performing arts as one of the 'media' for a programme of mass communication was influenced by the success with this medium by, a) the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA) during the nationalist struggle and, b) community development programmes both before and after Independence* (Mathur, 1954; Mayer, 1958; Miles, 1961).

The folk performing arts of folk "media" - drama, poetry, songs, dance-drama, puppetry, etc., - were seen as a necessary complement to the modern mass media. They flourish in remote rural areas untouched by newspaper and radio** and as age-old, community-based, and trusted sources of information and enlightenment could be more persuasive than the modern mass media. As part of "traditional" culture they would have the credibility to convince people to overcome "traditional" ways. They could transform national objectives and policies in planners' abstract language into living images which rural people could understand and at the same time provide the direct, person-to-person contact needed to help people translate these ideas into action. Moreover, the programme could draw on the nation's own vast resource of creative talent and help to revitalize, what some had diagnosed was, a dying profession.

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* Political motives might also have been involved. At a time when Congress was attempting to dominate the consciousness industry and counter revolutionary propaganda in the villages, it was important to take control of all communication media including the folk media. In the period leading up to Independence the Communists had dominated the field of socially-oriented theatre through IPTA. In practice, then, the SDD represented one means of winning over traditional performers for purposes of government propaganda and pre-empting their use by other interests. Congress, as a party, however, did not take a major interest in the performing arts as an electioneering vehicle until the late 60's and early 70's when other parties had demonstrated its successful use as a vote-getting instrument. (Abrams, 1971)

** In 1981 radio signals reach 90% of the population yet only 20% of the estimated 20 million receivers are owned by rural people. (Raghavan, 1981)

In the beginning the programme operated as a small unit within All-India Radio with one full-time officer. With limited resources the initial approach had to be indirect, working through other government departments to encourage the use of folk theatre as a means of communication and community education at the local level. (Mane, 1980). Later on when more resources became available the Song and Drama Unit started to recruit its own troupes for a mobile programme*. Traditional actors were hired but it was soon discovered that their illiteracy prevented them from scripting the plays and made rehearsals a painful process of word-for-word repetition and memorization. Urban writers invited to do the script-writing on a commissioned basis refused to participate (in the beginning) saying this was propaganda and not art.

The least problematic medium seemed to be puppetry and so teams of puppeteers were hired to tour northern India with Five Year Plan publicity. (Richmond, 1973). The success of this early experiment gave the unit some confidence and it started to commission troupes in other fields (eg. drama troupes, balladeers, poets, composite programmes, etc.) Procedures for registering and remunerating groups were worked out** and more and more private troupes were hired for short-term touring assignments. During this same period many communities were encouraged by community development staff to build village stages as self-help projects and there was some discussion about the work of the unit helping to inspire and revitalize amateur or semi-professional drama groups at the village level.

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* This idea of hiring troupes to tour the countryside with plays and songs on development was the mobile strategy inherited from the colonial mobile information campaigns - a model adopted by the Directorate of Field Publicity (of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting), which deploys and supervises the song-and-drama troupes in the field.

** Private troupes are judged by selection committees and are given a quality rating which determines their income.

In 1959 the unit formed its first full-time troupe - in effect the performers became civil servants combining desk jobs with evening performances and touring. In 1960 the unit was given the status of an independent Division within the Ministry and its budget was expanded.

In the 60's the Division began to expand the number of full-time troupes and to open up regional offices. Each troupe was assigned to a different area of the country and attached to a regional office, each headed by a senior officer (with theatre training and experience). The Division concentrated on the development of full-time troupes since, it was argued, they would produce high-quality performances and be in a position to respond quickly to the information campaigns of government. The part-time troupes were (and are) outside the direct control of the SDD - the SDD hires them but the Field Publicity Directorate supervises their work in the field - and it was felt little could be done to improve their quality. An evaluation of the Division's work in 1964 supported the expansion of departmental troupes and suggested that they could function as a demonstration model for the private troupes.*

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* The Vidyalankar Study Team's report on the Five-Year Plan publicity programme and the 1960 mail questionnaire study by the Information Ministry's Research and Reference Division have been the only evaluations of the Division in its 28-year history.

In 1965 - 1966 a border war with China erupted and four new full-time troupes were quickly formed and pressed into service to combat Chinese propaganda and instill a sense of patriotism and defence preparedness among the border populations.* This work was so successful that many more troupes were formed for "winning the hearts and minds" of villagers along the border**.

In the late 60's the Indian government launched a massive family planning campaign and the Division started to participate in the communication component. It commissioned many scripts on this topic and in 1970 set up four new troupes to specialise on family planning themes. (Several of the state song-and-drama troupes were revitalized during this period to work on family planning communication.) In 1974 the Division hosted an international seminar in Delhi on the utilization of traditional media for family planning communication.

In 1976 during the Emergency many privates troupes, which normally only work for SDD for 20 days a year, were pressed into touring months on end as part of the government's massive propaganda drive. During this period the range of themes were broadened to include not only major policies from the Five-Year Plan but also Mrs. Ghandi's 20-point programme: house sites for the homeless, land reform, eradication of untouchability, abolition of bonded labour, rural health, etc.

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* This programme was partially motivated by the success of the Chinese propaganda troupes on the other side of the border (Richmond, 1973).

** It is interesting to note that during the same period of time "counter-insurgency theatre" programmes were organized in Malaysia, Laos, and India. See Brandon (1967) and Mahoney (1975).

Organisation and the SDD Process

At present the Song and Drama Division employs 41 full-time troupes and about 500 registered part-time troupes.* Twenty-eight of the full-time troupes are engaged in border publicity work; four others specialize in family planning communication; and the remainder serve as generalist troupes attached to the regional offices.

The national office of the Song and Drama Division, based in Delhi, determines the over-all policy of the Division and commissions some of the scripts used by departmental troupes. Up until recently it operated in a highly centralized fashion, prescribing the messages and even the scripts to be used in various parts of the country.** It maintains a number of troupes for national functions.

Each regional office manages its own full-time troupe and commissions a number of private troupes within the region. On paper its job is primarily professional - to select suitably skilled private troupes, commission the preparation of scripts, rehearse its own troupe, and provide guidance for the private parties in message content and technical aspects. In practice, however, much of the regional officer's time is taken up with the process of "contracting" troupes.

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* In addition most state governments have their own Song and Drama Units. For a detailed description of one of these State Government programmes, see Abrams (1975). He noted that in the period from 1971 to 1974 the Maharashtra State contingent had increased from 40 to 80 troupes. In 1971 it was estimated that more than 400 villages (one million people) were reached by this programme - out of 55 million people living in 38,000 villages in Maharashtra State.

** This highly centralised approach accounts for the general and sloganistic nature of the messages - they represent national policy but do not reflect the specifities of the local situation. The current director of the Song and Drama Division has identified this weakness and is attempting to use folk media in a more selective and strategic way. In my interviews with him he cautioned against the use of folk media on a mass undifferentiated basis, suggesting that it should be used on a selective basis with specific messages for specific priority problems and areas.

An Inter-media Publicity Co-ordination Committee - made up of representatives from SDD, All-India Radio, TV, Directorate of Field Publicity, and the State Department of Information - plans each quarterly schedule of programmes, taking into account community fairs, festivals, requests from community development staff, etc. They do not need to wait for formal approval of its programme from central headquarters (in Delhi). However, script approval must be obtained from the national office.

Field deployment of the private troupes is organized by the Field Publicity Directorate. It has a network of Publicity Officers based in the field who are responsible for a mobile publicity programme of films, seminars, exhibitions, and song-and-drama troupes. In planning each programme the Field Publicity Officer determines on what occasions he needs a song-and-drama troupe and then contacts the regional SDD office to select a suitable troupe from the register. The didactic content is agreed on and a schedule of performances drawn up. In the field the Publicity Officer keeps a check on the group, writing a report on each performance.*

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* This report includes information on the date, place, and duration of the performance, audience size and reaction, and the themes covered. It is a pre-requisite for payment.

At the local level the Field Publicity Officer works through the village panchayat and, in some cases, the Block Development Officer to publicize the song-and-drama performance and decide on a suitable venue, normally just outside the panchayat or school. Local dignatories open and close the programme; occasionally the Field Publicity Officer will give a post-performance talk reinforcing the point of the play and inviting questions. The song-and-drama performance is often part of a larger programme which includes films.

When the Division started, there was no theory on folk media utilisation. Theory developed from practice - through experimenting with various types of folk arts and various ways of inserting didactic messages. They discovered for example, that for purposes of "instrumentalization", folk media can be grouped into three different categories:

- ritual forms (eg., tribal dances, religious arts) which are inappropriate for development communication because of their in-built resistance to the insertion of foreign contents;
- traditional forms on mythological or historical themes whose overall structure is rigid but permit didactic content to be communicated through the jester or narrator in the interludes between episodes of the traditional story;
- modernized forms ("transitional" or "syncretic") in which a totally fresh story line is possible.* (Ranganath, 1979, p. 5).

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* For a definition and examples of "transitional" forms, see Gunawardana (1971) or Brandon (1967).

They also found that a totally didactic approach turned off an audience. So they use a mixed format - straight entertainment items to capture and hold the audience interspersed with message-oriented plays, songs, and social commentary.

Scripting is handled in two ways. Scripts for the departmental troupes are produced on a commissioned basis by regional playwrights. The private parties are expected to produce their own, incorporating the messages provided by government. Often this takes an improvised form. Control of sorts is exercised by the Field Publicity Officer who checks the performance. (Parmar, 1975, p. 5).

A common feature of many scripts is to compare the lives of two individuals or families - one "modern" and the other "traditional". For example, a typical family planning play tells the story of two neighbours: one Rama who ignores the advice of the family planning motivator and subsequently finds it increasingly difficult to feed, clothe, and manage his rapidly growing family; the other his neighbour Shamo heeds the advice, limits his family to two children and reaps the benefits.* Another example (given to me by a Harijan animateur in Tamil Nadu) is an agricultural modernization play about a "traditional" farmer who, faced with a plague of rats, beats the rats with a stick and in the process destroys his crop. (Later he is advised by the agricultural officer to buy a certain pesticide.)

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* This modern-traditional juxtaposition as the structure for many of the SDD stories (particularly those of Family Planning) has been labelled (by its critics) the "Rama-Shamo" technique after the most frequently used names of the principal characters.

Another common form is the "change-of-heart" plot. For example, in a play on untouchability, a Harijan bonded labourer (or Harijan mid-wife) is treated badly by a caste landlord until the day when he saves the landlord from drowning (or the mid-wife saves the landowner's daughter-in-law during labour), after which the landlord has a profound "change of heart". In a play on national integration three families from three different areas of India (and three different castes) meet on a pilgrimage in Benares. The elders can't get along with each other (although the youngsters get on well) until a crisis arises where one of them requires a blood transfusion and only one of the others has the right type of blood - and the process prompts an immediate conversion in attitudes towards one another.

The performers are commercial troupes who are engaged for an annual tour of shows never exceeding 20 in number.* In southern India three-person Burrakatha troupes are paid R100 - 150 per show, depending on the quality of the performance and the reputation of the party. (Das, 1980). (This compares with the R150 - 300 they earn through a private show and accounts for the declining interest in government-sponsored work.) Of those interviewed in a survey of Burrakatha troupes, 40% were registered with SDD or the State Department of Information - none of the Harijan troupes had been registered.

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* During the Emergency troupes were engaged for months at a stretch to propagate the 20-point programme.

JAGRAN

Origin and History

Jagran meaning "Awakening" is a mobile mime troupe which sprang up in the wake of the massive population control programme in India in the last half of the 60's. During this period there was a massive influx of foreign aid and international pressure to implement a national family planning programme.* Communication was to be a major aspect of this programme and many non-government organizations were created to experiment with various media and approaches. Jagran was one of them.

Jagran's founder, Aloke Roy, an artist by training, was drawn to the development communication field after some experiences in relief work in Rajasthan. In 1967 he was approached by a senior family planning official to find a means of communication which could cut across all language barriers to propagate the small family norm. (This seemed a formidable problem given the 17 official languages and 208 recognized dialects in India). Roy eschewed the use of traditional drama (because of its regionally specific nature and use of regional languages and also to avoid the whole issue of whether traditional media should be used for development communication) and turned to the medium of mime - a bold, non-verbal style which could appeal and communicate to everyone and provide an effective means of entry into the community*. (Shiveswarkar, 1978).

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* Between 1968 and 1972 - the period during which family planning became a high priority in Indian development programmes - AID funding for population control escalated four-fold from $34 million to $123 million while their health care funding dropped from $164 million to $60 million. Other multi-lateral agencies followed suit. AID has used its leverage with development grants and food aid to force Third World countries to accept its population control policies.

Roy was particularly impressed by mime's capacity for caricaturing social behaviour: "Mime is recognition of our own dilemmas. When foolishness is held up to laughter, common sense wins and the message is unmistakeable." (Jagran leaflet). He identified comic situations faced by people with large families (eg. the predicament of getting on a crowded bus with a pregnant wife and ten kids), put them into frames with characters and gestures, and produced short sequences to convey simple messages:

> We pose a common problem,
> illustrate it with a story,
> and then suggest a solution,
> however simple. (Interview, 1980)

This medium and the approach to using it seemed to work and after the first experiment Roy was commissioned by many other agencies to promote family planning, nutrition, and other development messages (eg. government savings and loan schemes). In this first experimental period (1968 - 1974), Jagran covered a vast area - Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, West Bengal, Bihar, and Delhi. The troupe worked about half a year in Delhi - its home base - and spent the other half on the road touring. Funds came from the Pathfinder Fund (American family planning foundation), CARE (with

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* In the beginning Jagran tried out printed media (posters, publications, etc.) in addition to mime but these were unsuccessful due to literacy constraints and other problems. (Fernandes, 1980)

USAID backing), the United Commercial Bank, Caritas, etc.

During this period Jagran promoted itself as a highly flexible, low-cost, freelance group that would go anywhere and make itself available to any development agency. In a publicity document it advertised its willingness to "propagate any message the sponsors would like it to disseminate among the masses - the message and theme can be varied and changed whenever the sponsor wants it".

In 1972 CARE India invited Jagran to take part in a multi-media mass communication campaign on nutrition in the rural areas of Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The campaign was evaluated and Jagran's work was given a high rating. One social worker is quoted to have said: "What we could not teach in six months about health, nutrition, and population education, mime has done in a one hour programme". (CARE, 1974). In 1973 OXFAM (U.K.) commissioned Jagran to produce a series of plays publicizing a new clinic based in the slums of Delhi. The performances produced the desired effect - clinic attendances improved.

During the Emergency a major event took place which changed Jagran's widely itinerant existence and gave it a permanent role in Delhi. Under the repressive powers of the Emergency and the pretext of a Beautification Campaign, Sanjay Ghandi launched a full-scale attack on the slums of Delhi, destroying homes with bulldozers and herding over 700,000 people to an area 20 mil[illegible]rth of the city*. They had been promised new homes, but it took several months before they were "resettled" in new housing areas on the outskirts of Delhi.

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* This event was also the pretext for a compulsory vasectomy drive, a campaign so brutal in approach that it provoked fierce resistance resulting in many deaths in police clashes. There was no compensation for the demolished houses even though for some it represented s bstantial investments in construction materials. (Singh, 1977)

The new houses turned out to be one-room tenements constructed on plots of 25 square yards each. The occupants - construction workers, domestic servants, office cleaners, hawkers, etc. - worked in the industries, kitchens and markets of Delhi and had long journeys in and out every day by bus. Many of these were first generation migrants to the cities, having been forced out of the rural areas by landlessness and dwindling unemployment. There were no schools and only a few clinics with inadequate staff. Only basic services were provided - drinking water, public toilets, drainage,sewage, and the bare minimum of street lighting.

The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) approached Jagran to mount a motivational campaign to "teach the residents how to use modern services". The DDA complained that residents didn't flush the toilets, often vandalized the taps, and waited for government to fix them. They wanted Jagran to instill a sense of collective responsibility, to motivate a 'self-help' approach to the upkeep of these basic services.

Jagran agreed to help and after some informal research into the problem, produced a number of sketches. One of them emphasized the importance of the water facilities by showing a man having a shower in winter when the taps are broken. These water and sanitation sketches were performed along with their existing repertoire on family planning, nutrition, and other themes. In one community the performance produced a positive reaction. People offered to raise the money if Jagran would fix the tap. (They didn't trust each other with handling the money). Jagran declined, saying it was the residents' responsibility. Eventually the residents raised the money and fixed the tap.

Since 1976 Jagran has continued this work in the resettlement colonies, concentrating their efforts on 16 of the 35 resettlement colonies so that "the education imparted really trickles down to every individual and stays with him thereafter" (EZE grant application, May 1979). Their current funding sources include OXFAM (UK), CARE (India), Christian Aid, UNICEF, and other international agencies. During the Emergency Jagran received some funds from government to promote family planning and Mrs. Ghandi's 20-point programme but since then there has been no financial support from government.

In 1977 Roy met Paulo Freire. This had some influence on Jagran's work and the way it presented itself. New political themes were added to the repertoire - atrocities against Harijans* and corruption by social worker/politicians - and Roy started to describe Jagran as a "theatre of the oppressed", leading through a process of awareness to organization and politization:

> Strategically our aim is to
> politicize people but we
> adopt tactics for entry
> purposes - eg. through
> family planning. (Interview, 1980)

Jagran defines its role, however, primarily in terms of development communication, rather than community development or organizing popular movements. Its job is to raise awareness, to make people conscious of, a) obstacles to their development, b) services provided by government, c) their responsibilities to their community, and d) their rights as citizens. In the process Jagran attempts to change "traditional habits and attitudes" which they see as the major obstacle (along with ignorance of opportunities for self-advancement through government services) to Harijan self-development. Roy describes the "liberation of Harijans' as a

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* It must be noted that anti-untouchability was also one of the electioneering planks of Mrs. Ghandi's 20-point programme.

> long process. The first stage is to bring awareness. People are unaware of the possibility of change. If it is hammered constantly, consciousness may bring about change. (Interview, 1980)

Roy however declines an organizing role:

> All we can do is to make people aware.... the next step must be taken by the people themselves. As outsiders we can only encourage, we cannot take the leadership or organising role. Leadership must emerge from within. (Interview, 1980)

Jagran Process and Organization

Over the years Jagran has developed a large repertoire covering a range of topics - evils of indebtedness, drunkenness, the dowry system, and neglected children; exposed food, nutrition, hygiene, family planning; maintenance of community pumps, water taps, public toilets, etc.; co-operation, civic consciousness, voting rights; ill-treatment of Harijans and the duplicity of social worker/politicians. New themes are added as Jagran identifies new needs or receives new requests from sponsors or development agencies*.

Each daily programme is a selection of these themes. The choice of items is done on or around the day of the show - according to the director's sense of what is needed and occasionally in response to specific events in the colonies. A typical programme would include 6 to 8 items and run for 1½ to 2 hours. One programme, for example, included items on family planning, bank loans, exposed food, community water tap, bank savings, and nutrition. Examples of the plots include:

> Two wrestlers eat some food before their match, one a banana and the other exposed food. The former wins.
>
> A man tries to get on a crowded bus with his pregnant wife and nine children. After missing several buses he pleads with a bus driver to let him on. The driver is impatient and after allowing a few of the children to get on starts the bus, leaving half of the family stranded.
>
> A social worker/politician who claims to be acting as a go-between with government for a resettlement colony takes credit for a community centre which the colony's youth have built on their own. When they protest this claim, the social worker incites the police to attack the youth.

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* Occasionally there is a direct request from a community to take up an issue. In 1981, for example, the residents in one area organized a successful mass protest against the hoarding and blackmarketing practices of the colony's government-licensed shop. They pressured the political authorities to arrest the shop-owner. Jagran happened to be performing in this area after the incident and was approached by several residents to re-enact the struggle in mime - as a means of announcing a people's victory. (Interview, 1981)

> An exploited rickshaw puller is persuaded by his friend to stop working for the rickshaw owner and take out a loan from the national bank to buy his own rickshaw.
>
> A child whose diet is lacking in green leafy vegetables is attacked by the Malnutrition Monster and as a result becomes anaemic. Later, when he starts to eat the vegetables, he successfully resists the Monster's attack.

The production of each mime sequence is usually based on some form of topic research. There is no detailed information available on this process but it does involve collecting information from various sources: government institutions in the area, formal and informal leaders, government's own surveys, etc. A written scenario is produced and the actors are trained to perform it.

Performances are normally held in the afternoon. Crowds range from 100 to 1000 people, the majority women and children. The group performs "in the round" with the audience surrounding them. There is no stage - only an open piece of ground. It is a rough-and-ready, highly mobile theatre - no props, no elaborate sets, no lighting, no stage - only a bit of white make-up to accentuate the expressions on the actors' faces. The sketches rely heavily on stereotyped characters - the moneylender, the brahmin, the out-caste, the demon, the harried mother, etc. The action of each mime is reinforced by a narration in the local dialect, using a hand-held battery-powered microphone. In the performance I witnessed, the narrator kept up a steady monologue, cracking jokes and commenting on the action throughout the performance. At the end of the family planning sketch he asked the audience in Hindi, "How many children is best?" and got the expected reply, "Do" (two). In one of the plays (on Deprived Children), the narrator conducts a short dialogue with the audience.

At the end of the performance there is no organized discussion. Everyone disburses and the actors disappear inside a local shed to wash off their make-up. There is some informal conversation with a few hangers-on, but from my observation and that of others this is fairly limited. The performance is done and it is time to go. The only immediate "follow-up" of sorts is a fairly regular practice of interviewing audience members - but this seems to be more for evaluation purposes than educational reinforcement.*

Jagran's membership fluctuates, with actors leaving and new members being recruited and trained to take their place. The average size of the troupe is about 8 - 10 actors. The actors are young and largely unemployed or partially unemployed. "Preoccupation with their insecure conditions often keeps their involvement at a marginal, mechanical level." (Krishnan, 1979). Roy, however, accounts for the turnover in terms of the commitment of the actors:

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* From a practitioner's perspective the large and mixed audience militated against post-performance discussion. Jagran has the microphone, has dominated the event, and a discussion at this point in this context would probably be a passive question-and-answer session. However, the large bulk of the audience are children. They could be drawn off and entertained elsewhere (by a few actors) and the remaining adults could come together for a more informal and effective discussion.

> Idealism does not grow in slums if you are performing near a public convenience or a fly-infested refreshment stand. Many unemployed people come to me strictly for the job. They use us as a training area and then get lured away by film or television. (Voigt and Jain, 1980, p.42)

In the beginning all of the actors were middle-class youth but in the last few years Roy has attempted to recruit some working class youth from the resettlement colonies. Attempts to involve women have been unsuccessful, the rough conditions of the work cited as the main deterrent. The actors are trained as "development communicators", learning the skills of mime and some basic notions of development. Roy, however, does limit their work to communication, asserting that, "they are not community development workers nor political activists". (Interview, 1980).

Roy is the prime mover and constant factor in Jagran. The actors come and go but he remains throughout - the manager, fund-raiser, theatre director, play-wright, trainer, documentalist, publicist, and driver. A brilliant entrepreneur, he has kept Jagran alive for over a decade in the rather precarious business of running a non-government agency. He has adopted the patriarchal style of many Indian NGO's and theatre companies, making all the key decisions and leaving the actors out of management tasks and strategizing about Jagran's work*.

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* Editor's note: This managerial style is in direct contrast with that of Sistren (Jamaica) who make decisions collectively and involve all members in management work.

Evaluation

Jagran has produced extensive documentation on their work and has been evaluated on four occasions. The first evaluation by CARE-India in 1974 showed that Jagran's sketches were more persuasive than the other media used in the CARE communication campaign (CARE, 1974).

In 1978 and 1980 two separate studies were done based on a content analysis of the attitudes and opinions expressed by local people in post-performance interviews* (Mehra, 1978; Fernandez, 1980). These studies revealed that the shows were popular and stimulated informal discussion within the community, even involving those who hadn't attended:

> I have never seen the dramas
> but have heard about them...
> People keep telling each other
> to take some examples from the
> shows. (1978)

Many statements indicated changes in individual awareness and behaviour, for example,

> After seeing Rakshas I have
> started eating green leafy
> vegetables. I am very sick
> and very weak physically. It
> may be helpful for my health
> and family. (1978)
>
> I will never again touch or
> buy exposed food. (1980)

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* The results are a bit suspect since the interviews were conducted by the performers themselves immediately after the performance when the respondents were most likely well disposed towards them as entertainers.

Other statements noted people's growth in self-respect - for example:

> Your drama Harijan is my most
> favourite item because I am a
> Harijan woman. Sometimes when
> I see this drama I feel myself
> who has some existence of human
> being in this world. (1978)

Jagran's work has also inspired public censure of bad social behaviour. For example, during one play about a husband who spends all his money at the liquor store, women spontaneously began to point out the heavy drinkers in the audience.

While Jagran's work has resulted in changes on the part of individuals, collective organizing and action has been far more difficult to achieve*. This may be attributed to a number of factors:

- Jagran's own attitude to organizing: "Our role is to make people aware but we cannot organize people. They must do that themselves. Our job is to do the long, steady work of building up people's consciousness to the point where they take action." (Interview, 1980)
- The nature of Jagran's repertoire - it largely consists of items related to individual behavioural change and includes few issues around which a community could effectively organise.
- Jagran's lack of regular and organized contact with the local residents' associations.** (Fernandez, 1980)

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* Repairing the water tap was one instance; another involved the organization of a 'clean-up' campaign of one colony during a sweepers' strike. (Mehra, 1978).

** Their collaboration with local development agencies (eg. the clinic) has been much more active. Jagran regularly consults the clinic doctor about the content of their shows and supports many of the clinic's preventative health initiatives.

ACTION FOR CULTURAL AND POLITICAL CHANGE (ACPC)

Origins and History

Action for Cultural and Political Change (ACPC) was initiated by six young Harijan graduates in Tamil Nadu in 1974.* Their aim was to politicise and organize Harijan and other agricultural labourers to fight for basic rights and better working and living conditions. They were motivated by a deep sense of outrage at the daily humiliation, social ostracism, economic subjugation, and cultural oppression faced by their fellow Harijans. They recognized the bankruptcy of conventional methods of development to solve the basic problems of the landless and the sharpening contradictions between rich and poor accentuated by the Green Revolution and other rural development policies. They also felt that the earlier organizing work among rural labourers in Tamil Nadu by the parties of the left had come to an impasse and fresh strategies and initiatives were needed.**

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* ACPC was the initial name. This was changed to the more innocuous "Rural Community Development Association (RCDA)" during the Emergency when they were under political attack and needed to register themselves as a voluntary organization in order to survive. Since 1978 when they adopted a decentralized strategy, new animation structures were created in each area to do the work and each was given its own name. For simplicity I have used ACPC throughout this case study.

** In the 40s and 50s the Communists had organized a strong labourers' movement in the fertile, well-irrigated, highly capitalized farming areas of Thanjavur District but they had been much less successful in Tamil Nadu's dry-belt where capital intensive agriculture had made slower inroads.

Their approach was influenced by the "Community Organizing" (CO) methods of Saul Alinsky, an American labour and community organizer who had devised a systematic approach for empowering 'have-not' communities through mass organization and confrontational tactics.* This approach had attracted the social action wing of the church in Asia** and the team members had worked on the first church-sponsored experiment in India - a slum-based project in Madras (1971-1973).*** This experience convinced them that some of the CO ideas were transferable to the Indian context, with appropriate adaptations, but that a) they should shift their focus to the rural areas, the source of the urban squatter problems and b) they should supplement the CO methodology with an educational approach more suited to their potential audience - economically exploited, socially ostracized, and feudally dependent rural labourers.*

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* This approach follows a well-defined process: 1) the community invites a trained organizer to come and work with them 2) s/he identifies and trains local leaders 3) together they build an organization, largely through mobilizing people for mass confrontations with authority on specific issues using a range of tactics (strikes, harassing bureaucrats, boycotts, marches, etc.) 4) the organization uses its newly created power to make a set of demands on the authorities (eg. more jobs, services, control/participation in decision-making, etc.) 5) over time the outside organizer transfers initiatives to the local organization and leaves. (Alinsky, 1946) This approach was adopted by the American Farm Workers Union in agitating for better working conditions for farm labourers in California.

** The most well-known application of this strategy in Asia is the Tondo organization of squatters in Manila's port area who resisted eviction and the demolition of their homes and pressured the authorities to provide basic services in the early 70s. (Maglaya, 1978)

*** One of the team members had also worked for two years on one of the Alinsky projects in Chicago, organizing the black community.

Paulo Freire's approach uniquely addressed this audience and its low self-image and provided a concrete methodology for overcoming fear and dependence and building class consciousness, self-confidence and a fighting spirit. It could be used to structure discussion on the issues and strategies for struggle, ensuring that all participants understood the objectives and implications of each stage of the organizing process.

They also drew on Gandhi's notion of challenging social systems that perpetuate injustice and some of his specific tactics for protest; and they adopted a Marxist approach for analyzing social situations.

In the first four years (1974-1977) they worked as a team in the Chittamoor area (Chinglepet District) experimenting with their approach and building their first labourers' movement. Chittamoor was strategically chosen because of the large concentration of Harijans (79% of the population as compared with the national percentage of 11%) and the brutal treatment of Harijan labourers by caste landlords - both important factors in building caste and class consciousness and a labourers' movement. Isolating a 'class enemy' (a key tactic of the CO approach) was also straightforward - the large landlords constituted only 5% of the population yet owned vast lands of 6-8,000 acres each and kept entire Harijan villages under their economic, social and political control.

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* They also discovered that Alinsky's method lacked a clear ideology. It could mobilize people for struggle but after achieving a number of victories the 'movement' lost momentum without clear long-term goals related to societal change. In appropriating Alinsky's method, ACPC has added a clear ideological dimension to give their work a broader, longer-term, revolutionary purpose beyond the narrow objectives of the initial organizing phase.

By 1978 when the ACPC staff moved out of Chittamoor, the newly formed agricultural labourers' movement (which had been created through their efforts and had taken over the organizing initiatives) had won two major wage strikes, obtained written agreements from the landlords to stop all beatings, taken possession of farming land and house sites, released a number of families from bonded labour, and successfully petitioned local authorities for many basic services.*

At the end of the Chittamoor period, ACPC decided to expand its work. Four of the organizers each took on a new area, trained a new team of animateurs, and set up a new animation structure.** The aim was to develop labourers' organizations in each area which over time could develop links and form a broad-based movement. Each team of animateurs was given its own autonomy. However, the four teams remain in close touch, come together regularly for joint training, reflection, and strategizing, exchange experienced animateurs, and provide refuge and advice for each other in times of crisis. This decentralized and horizontally 'networked' approach was chosen as a much better structure for building a popular movement than a monolithic, highly visible, centralized approach.

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* For a detailed listing of their achievements, see Von der Weid (1981) pp. 145-147.

** The other two organizers remained behind in Chittamoor as resource persons for the labourers' movement.

Each organization represents a temporary and flexible animation structure. Once the area has been organized and a self-reliant labourers' movement formed, the animation organization dissolves and the animateurs move on to new areas. Within each team and the network of teams there is a collective approach to the work; each team member has an administrative responsibility for the area association as well as being expected to do field work and live in the field.

ACPC Process

The ACPC organizing process consists of a number of inter-related activities: 1) getting into, accepted, and 'grounded' in an area; 2) adult education and literacy classes; 3) leadership training and action committees; 4) cultural action programmes and mass meetings; 5) struggles and consolidating a movement.

1) Getting Started

ACPC only moves into an area after it has been invited. Its first task is to select good bases for the organizing work; once these villages catch fire, the movement will easily spread to the other villages. Factors involved in selecting a "key village" include its location in relation to neighbouring villages (each animateur covers 3 or 4 other villages from his 'home' village); population; percentage of Harijans engaged in agricultural labour; a history of struggle, conflict or flagrant corruption; the known presence of strong local leaders; its position in relation to the caste Hindu village (i.e. sufficiently independent for organising to take place undisturbed); accessibility by road, etc.*

Once a key village is chosen, the animateur finds a place to stay and starts to get to know people and win their confidence. He meets with people informally, explains why he has come, and collects signatures on a form approving his presence in the village. He also carries out a study of the area - land ownership, categories of labour (daily paid, contract, bonded, sharecropper), seasonality of work, wage rates, methods of payment, "injustice facts" (i.e. demeaning behaviour demanded of Harijans - eg. having to wear the dhoti tied around the thighs as an indication of servility), government services, etc. This survey provides some of the themes for the adult education programme.

After a month he calls a mass meeting to explain publicly the objectives and implications of ACPC's work. He explains that the work is to build a labourers' movement, not to do economic projects or charity. While he uses inspirational words, he also cautions them - "It won't be easy. The landlords will try to stop us. Are you prepared to get into trouble with the landlords?"

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* The team of animateurs are located within one or two panchayat unions (40-50 villages) rather than being spread out over many unions. This makes it possible for the group to work as a team, to co-ordinate efforts, and to get results quickly.

If the community is willing to accept the ACPC programme and its risks, the animateur stays in the village and the adult education classes begin.

2) Adult Education and Literacy Classes

Literacy is a strategic 'entry point' - Harijans express a desire to read and write and this motivates their initial participation. As an innocuous-looking activity literacy conceals from the landlords and bureaucrats the real intentions of the ACPC organisers. Before people have developed some confidence, unity and fighting spirit, this cover is very important.*

The classes are held in the middle of the village in the open air and are meant to provide a meeting place and a discussion forum for the whole village. The children, most of whom do not attend school during the day because their labour power is needed by their families, attend the first session from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. Then the adults join in. Normally the sessions begin with singing in order to attract people's interest and immediate participation.

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* An alternative or additional entry point in some areas is a health programme. People need a health programme and through this programme people can be conscientized and organized. This is particularly effective in the organization of a women's movement since men are often reluctant to let their wives participate in an outside organization. ACPC makes it a condition of the health programme that the women join the movement. This development of a separate but linked women's movement is a fairly recent activity. ACPC started it having discovered that a) women are super-exploited in agricultural work and in the household and b) they are strong fighters, often more courageous in facing up to the landlords since they don't work directly under their supervision as the men do.

The study sessions follow Freire's method of discussing vital socio-economic and political issues. Unlike many programmes which have "misappropriated" Freire, ACPC avoids a pre-packaged approach with a centrally produced "curriculum" of issues and codes. Since literacy per se is not a major objective of ACPC, there are no limitations on the choice of issues because of phonetic (literacy) requirements.* Issues are selected locally and topically as the sessions develop and there is no predetermined pace or sequence: those issues which arouse major interest may be discussed for several weeks and study sessions may be postponed while the group takes action on certain issues. This flexibility is necessary in order to convert what is conventionally a purely 'educational' exercise into a vital social animation process.

This flexibility also extends to the 'codes'. Unlike Freire's centrally produced drawings, the group creates its own codes - short improvised skits or role-plays performed by the animateur and group members.** Sometimes these skits are worked out beforehand but often they develop spontaneously in a form of role-play - for example the animateur might stand up and shout "I'm the landlord and I want some bonded labour" and people spontaneously accept roles and move into the drama. This is highly participatory, rough drama and everyone joins in.

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* ACPC reports that people's initial desire to learn to read and write dies quickly as they begin to tackle some of the life-and-death political and economic issues facing them. After learning to write their name (to avoid the humiliation of using their thumb print), people lose interest in the literacy aspect which is eventually dropped.

** This localized production guarantees that the issues are framed from the perspective of the participants and not some remote educational planner.

After each skit is performed, the animateur leads the group in talking about their own experience of the issues - eg. being exploited and manipulated by the landlords, ostracized, beaten, and their huts burned, cheated by shopkeepers and money lenders, sterilized without consent by the family planning authorities, etc. Drawing out this latent dissatisfaction and discontent is an important starting point.

The animateur also tries to get people to see the objective reality of their exploitation.* For example on the "work" issue he might ask some of the following questions -

> How many of you have land? How much? Which quality? Among caste Hindus who possesses land? How much? Of what quality? Who cultivates the land? How much do you get? Who really profits from the land? Do you know the law on land ceilings? Is this law applied? If not why?............(Von der Weid, 1981)

Each problem in the adult education classes - landlessness, poor working conditions, unemployment, untouchability, lack of services, alcoholism, etc. - is discussed in terms of how it is socially produced and maintained. On each issue the animateur challenges people to explain why the problem remains unsolved, getting them to bring out their fears, their dependency on the landlords and at the same time drawing out counter-information - positive experiences of organising, of taking action. He gets them to see that their own disunity is immobilizing and that many of the conflicts within their community have been created by the landlords. He also gets them to see how their own cultural conditioning - the myths and rationalizations they've accepted - reinforces their submissiveness and passivity. During the same period the animateur gets people to tackle some small "win-able" issue on which they're all willing to act, in order to show them they can do something about their situation.

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* This step is necessary. According to ACPC many agricultural workers believe their landlord's lament that he is making a loss because of the high costs of inputs.

3) Leadership Training and Action Committees

Leadership on the actions arising out of the adult education sessions is taken by an "action committee". This is formed by the animateur after he has spent about six months in the village. He selects about 10 to 15 people for this committee - highly motivated, selfless young people who have an understanding of the animateur's work and a certain defiant, fighting spirit.* Their job is to take the priority issues of the community, plan the tactics for each struggle, and mobilize the community's participation in each struggle.

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* The traditional leaders of the community are rarely invited to join this group since they are largely appointed and manipulated by the local power structure.

They meet regularly for training, normally late in the evening when the adult education sessions are over. Their study sessions prepare them to analyze problems and strategies in greater depth and to lead the community in taking action on various issues. Their training syllabus includes such topics as: one-acre analysis (a technique for analyzing the mode and relations of production at the micro-level); the various economic classes and relationships between them; government legislation relating to Harijans and to agricultural labourers; the functioning of panchayats and state institutions; legal procedures; political ideologies and parties. A common source of discussion is the daily newspaper which is analyzed in terms of the contradictions between official statements and actual practice.

An important aspect of this work is to prepare the leaders for confrontations with bureaucrats and landlords. Many of them will have never been inside government buildings, let alone made demands on government officials. Dramatization or role-playing help to prepare them. The animateur plays the bureaucrat and the leaders take turns presenting their case to the 'official'. After each practice session they discuss how they could improve their performance. Through role playing and critique they work out who is going to speak, what points are going to be made, what reaction they should expect from the official and their counter-responses, etc. They learn that government only responds to pressure and that their approach should be threatening - criticizing and discrediting the officials and pointing out their corrupt practices. When the roles are reversed and a leader plays the role of the bureaucrat, he begins to understand him and loses some of the fear in confronting him.

4) Struggle and Movement

Struggle is the means by which the Harijans challenge their oppressors. It is the mainspring for building and consolidating their movement: people become more unified, confident, and class conscious through struggling for concrete objectives. In the beginning the action committee takes up relatively small issues - for example, petitioning local bureaucrats for basic services (eg. wells, street lights, house sites, a teacher for the Harijan school, etc.).* These initial actions are neither massive nor explosive. Their aim is to build up people's unity, confidence and experience without inviting a major confrontation with the local power structure before they are ready for it.**

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* ACPC has capitalized on provisions in government development plans and legislation for basic reforms and services promised to the rural poor, most of which normally remain unfulfilled because there is little enthusiasm by the civil servants and no pressure on them to carry out these plans. The conventional expectation is that since the rural poor are unorganized they will wait for rather than demand these services. However, these 20-point programme promises, development plan targets, and reforms in the statute books provide important "within-the-law" targets for the initial organizing phase.

** In their initial project in Chittamoor ACPC antagonized the local bureaucrats unnecessarily, lumping them uniformly into the same 'enemy' camp along with the landlords and thus depriving themselves of a potential ally, particularly during periods of repression by the landowners. More recently they have changed their strategy, trying to work with the bureaucracy where they can and not creating an immediate enemy.

After succeeding on small actions the community moves on to more fundamental struggles using a wide range of tactics - eg. wage strikes, invading government offices en masse to press their demands, hunger strikes outside government offices to demand justice, land occupations, flooding public officials with telegrams and/or petitions, organizing support from urban-based middle class groups (who could publicize their situation and lobby on their behalf during a crisis).* This new level of struggle requires a larger mobilization of people - mass meetings are held, more labourers are invited to take an active part, and inter-village action committees are created to plan joint struggles and support each other's struggles.**

This new stage of struggle represents a direct attack on the local power structure and as a result provokes retaliation. The landlords harass their employees and sometimes fire them, vilify the ACPC organizers with government and the political parties, and sometimes openly attack the Harijans. An effective organiser uses this repression not as a setback but as the provocation needed to galvanize the labourers into a stronger organisation:

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* Strategies often need to be developed for each new situation. For example in one of the ACPC areas there is little wage employment - most labourers are forced to seek work outside the area - and therefore organizing around wage struggle would have been unsuccessful. A closer study of the area revealed that urban capitalists were buying up farming land and converting it into tree plantations, a form of production requiring a minimum of labour. The organization, therefore, decided to focus its struggles on this land use conversion which would intensify unemployment in the area. Their tactics involved stopping trucks coming into the area to plant trees, harassing bureaucrats about the sale of this land to the outside capitalists, and pressuring the government to release land to the landless labourers' organization.

** Throughout this stage the animateur tries to take more and more of a back-seat, advisory role rather than a leadership role. His job is to make people feel confident that they can do it themselves without any intermediary. It is essential that the victories be the community's victories, and not his victories.

> Whenever the legitimacy of the system is seriously undermined by the way the system tries to maintain itself, it needs only small efforts to transform the new awareness among the peasants, of being repressed, into a stronger revolutionary consciousness. (Huizer, 1980)

These more strategic struggles begin to take on a deeper significance. They not only achieve concrete gains but they also force the power structure to recognize the strength of the movement as a whole. They begin to see that they have to deal with it - to accept it, destroy it, co-opt it, or come to terms with it. The labourers' movement has to use this new recognition to press for more demands (eg. minimum statutory wage for all labourers, stopping all beatings, recognition of the labourers' movement in wage bargaining, freeing of bonded labourers, etc.) without being co-opted.

5) Cultural Action Programmes and Mass Meetings

These activities are organized at various stages of the process to build solidarity, deepen community discussion and understanding of the major issues, get people fired up, clarify the target for a specific struggle, assure massive support, and plan and agree on the strategies for struggle. These meetings are normally held before launching a struggle and often bring together agricultural labourers from a number of neighbouring villages. Their aims are double-edged: on one hand they want to stir people's emotions and rally their support; on the other hand they want to make sure people understand what they're getting into (eg. possible retaliation from landlords) so they can prepare for it.

Many of these meetings are conducted in the form of a highly participatory drama in which audience members respond to challenges and questions from the actors and discuss the issues presented in the play. This 'cultural action' programme is the most innovative activity of this kind that this writer has observed in popular education work anywhere in the Third World.* ACPC has recognized the unique role that popular drama can play in conscientization and organization and has evolved a systematic approach for using it in building a popular movement.**

ACPC's cultural work grew out of an analysis of the cultural practices and ideological conditioning of the Harijan community. Harijans are forced to live in segregated colonies and to maintain their social distance from caste Hindus yet they are socialized and integrated into the dominant Hindu culture. Through their economic dependency on the landlords - working in the landlords' fields and serving in their houses - Harijans develop a feeling of cultural inferiority and aspire to become full participants in caste Hindu society. Harijans worship the same god but not in the caste temple, attend the same festivals and watch the same plays but in a separately demarcated area. In effect they remain outside observers of someone else's rituals.

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* This contrasts with most popular theatre programmes in the Third World which are normally one-off events with weak links to an on-going process of organization and struggle.

** Many other animation groups in southern India have adopted ACPC's cultural action methodology. See Renuka's article on CROSS (1978) and other articles in HOW (New Delhi).

Without their own distinctive culture the Harijans cannot, like the tribals, build an identity and transform their situation out of their own cultural practice. They have no cultural expression which they can call their own.[*] The dramas performed by Harijan troupes are mere imitations of the caste Hindus' puranic dramas which deal with mythological themes legitimizing the caste hierarchy and Harijan debasement.[**] Performing troupes which come to the local area perform in the caste Hindu village and Harijans are forced to sit at the back. Some Harijan villages hire their own troupes as a form of prestige in imitation of the caste Hindus but it normally takes several years to save up sufficient funds to pay a professional troupe.

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[*] There are exceptions - drumming which Harijans are expected to provide for funerals by historical (feudal) precedent and a form of stick-fighting which the landlords'discourage because of its defensive potential. (Martins, 1980)

[**] Harijan actors are expected to refrain from performing the roles of gods like Krishna (because this would constitute an "impure act") and get the greatest pleasure out of playing the villain who ultimately gets killed - an indication of the extent to which they have internalised caste prejudice. The puranic dramas, for many commentators, have a deeper significance - representing the military and cultural colonization of the indigenous Dravidian population by the Aryan invaders, the initiators of the Brahmanic ideology.

The alternative form of entertainment to which Harijans are increasingly exposed is the cinema. The Tamil film industry reaches out into the rural areas as a powerful form of political indoctrination and control. Through these films agricultural labourers find a temporary release from the tensions of their troubled existence, and are persuaded to accept individualistic solutions to poverty (eg. marrying the daughter of a rich man) propagated by the dominant political parties.* (Sivathamby, 1971)

What was needed was cultural activity organized and performed by the Harijan communities themselves, expressing their problems, aspirations, and history of victimization and resistance. Instead of depending on the landlord's mythological dramas and outside commercial troupes, they needed to create their own dramas as tools in overcoming their own feelings of cultural inferiority, resisting the ruling class propaganda from the cinema, and fighting for their rights. These new forms of expression - drama, music, songs, mime, etc. - could play a vital role in drawing out and focusing the bottled up anger, frustrations, and daily humiliation of the harijans; making people recognize the source of their exploitation; developing a positive identity as Harijans and a class consciousness; and mobilizing people for mass action.

Cultural action programmes are arranged at different phases of the organising process. In the initial stage (within the first three months) the drama consists of a number of skits on various problems in the village. Between each sketch the actors discuss the problems with the audience, challenging them to do something about the problems:

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* The USA has no monopoly on movie-star politicians. Many of the most successful politicians in Tamil Nadu have achieved their fame through the film medium, including the current head of Government, M. G. Ramachandran.

> "Do you know of similar situations?"
> "Where, when, with whom, how, etc.?"
> "Why can't you do something?"
> "We are poor, if we take any action,
> we'll only get hurt."
> "But can't the landlords or authorities
> help you?"
> "No, the last person who went for help
> got beaten. He was told 'First, pay
> your debts'.
> "If we complain we'll be fired and our
> families will starve".

A skilful animateur makes use of the disagreements between members of the audience - the defeatist and the more daring - to help people deal with their fear and submissiveness, to raise and overcome some of the conflicts within the community, and to raise people's hopes for change. (Von der Weid, 1981, p. 114). These discussions also deal with some of the religious myths which reinforce passive responses to oppression.

In the second stage the drama shows a group of people (action committee) coming together and taking action on issues such as water, house sites, electricity, etc. through petitioning a government officer. There is no attempt at this point to frame the issue in terms of class struggle. The aim is simply to show that Harijans can solve their problems if they get organized. For example in one drama the women march with their water pots to the government office to demand access to a river in their area (which the landlord has grabbed for his exclusive use). When the bureaucrat refuses their request they smash their pots in front of him, a militant action which prompts him to do something about the problem.

The third stage drama marks the beginning of more fundamental struggles. The class enemy is identified: each of the key powerful figures are caricatured and their corrupt or exploitative practices exposed. The drama shows the labourers organizing to fight against these injustices. The actor playing the role of a youth leader, who has previous experience of urban trade unions, explains the importance of a labourers' organization and answers people's questions about organizing a strike and the consequences of a strike. Actors and audience discuss the strategies and tactics for a real strike (or other form of struggle) being planned by that community. Sometimes the actors will even role-play the reactions of the landlords meeting together.

The fourth stage coincides with the growth of the broader movement and is often enacted to a number of villages which are working together on various struggles. It shows that individual struggles are not sufficient, that the labourers need to build links with agricultural workers in other areas. One of the actors presents the objectives and perspectives of the agricultural labourers' movement and everyone (including the audience) questions him. In the course of this discussion the actor explains new strategies and tactics for broadening the movement - eg. organizing mass rallies of labourers at the district headquarters with a set of demands; organizing hunger strikes in front of government offices to protest injustices done to labourers in other villages; legal prosecution against landlords backed up by mass demonstrations. The fourth stage drama also introduces in simplified form a historical-materialist perspective. The different social formations throughout history are portrayed so that people can see how the capitalist system has arisen from a number of other social formations. It also shows how the feudal landlord is conditioned by the role he plays in feudal society - he has to act as an oppressor and never compromise with the poor, he is caught up in a system which has a history behind it. This gives people some of the analytical tools for critiquing their own society and understanding how they can move to a socialist society.

Unlike the short skits used in the adult education classes, the 'cultural action' programme takes a whole evening. The programme begins about 7 p.m. with revolutionary songs to attract the labourers returning from the fields. The whole village gathers around the stage area, which is lit with lights extending out into the audience and equipped with a loud speaker. The actors are some of the villagers and a few animateurs. The play is unscripted - the actors have agreed on a scenario beforehand and each improvises his/her lines. Although untrained, the actors have no difficulty dramatizing incidents and characters drawn from their own lives. They caricature their oppressors with real insight into their idiosyncracies - although in the beginning they have to overcome the initial fear that the landlords will find out and victimize them.

The 'play' is a number of skits on various problems linked through the principal characters - a clown character (who acts as a narrator/commentator), landlord, landlord's servant, youth leader - who appear throughout the play. Songs are performed between each skit. In the second stage drama observed by the writer, the play opened with a song by the clown about a Harijan girl who puts on saris and jewelry like a caste girl but is still ostracized; and another song caricaturing a Harijan traditional leader who boasts about his importance yet is shown to be simply the landlord's stooge.

The rest of the drama shows:

- a bonded labourer remaining loyal to his landlord and being tricked into signing a false bond paper
- another labourer approaching the landlord for a small plot of unused land, being turned down, and accepting it meekly
- the landlord in collusion with the government officials, attempting to appropriate drought relief funds meant for the Harijan village
- a trader adulterating his goods (eg. adding water to milk), hoarding, and money-lending at exorbitant rates
- Harijan initiatives being undermined by religion, alcohol, and manipulation by the landlords
- the bribing of a government official by the landlord.

In the final scene of the drama actors and audience discuss real plans, to be carried out the following day, to pressure government to deepen their well. They planned to march en masse to the Block Development Office and if he refused to help them to go on hunger strike outside his office.

Each drama not only shows the problems but gets the audience talking about them. It is a brilliant example of audience participation and dialogue (and not in the rather contrived fashion of conventional post-performance discussion). The Harijans are just sitting there, resting, tired from the day's work, enjoying the songs and jokes and slowly becoming absorbed by the drama. Suddenly they are being challenged and drawn into it. One of the characters - for example the loyal bonded labourer - walks into the open space in the middle of the audience and taunts them about their lack of loyalty to the landlord. An animateur in the audience is the first to argue back but soon everyone joins in, ridiculing him for being so submissive and accepting such bad treatment. This actor-audience dialogue continues for 5 to 10 minutes before shifting back to the stage. Later another actor puts a firm question to them - "Look, your brother is being beaten. Why are you sitting quietly? Why are you allowing this to happen?" and this provokes another furious response. Sometimes this discussion shifts to the audience itself where a fierce argument goes on among members of the audience.

This kind of dialogue is repeated at various points throughout the drama, stimulated by the actors, an animateur in the audience, or audience members themselves. For example when the bonded labourer is about to sign the false document or the government officer to be bribed there is a huge uproar with everyone trying to warn him - one old woman walks right up onto the stage to make her points. When the landlord tries to threaten the labourers (in the audience) into working for him, they shout back: "You don't pay us enough! We won't work without more pay." "You treat your animals better than you treat us." "Why don't you send your wife to work to see how it feels!" "Your big stomach is because of the money you haven't paid us!" When the landlord replies - "I've got the money and the power. I can do anything" one person shouts back: "Without our labour you can't get the money so what are you talking about!"

In the second, third, and fourth stages the drama constitutes a highly participatory struggle-planning meeting. For example in the third stage drama after introducing the notion of a strike, overcoming fears, and explaining its consequences the actor playing the youth leader leads the audience in discussing how to organize it - the most strategic time (during harvest), stopping labourers from other villages coming for work, winning their support, surviving during the strike, informing the police so their action is not misrepresented by the landlords, the terms and conditions for the strike, anticipating the landlords' divisive tactics and physical retaliation, etc.

These discussions with the audience that are built into the drama preclude the need for a follow-up mass meeting. By the end of the cultural evening there is a very clear understanding of the issues and a firm commitment to the action agreed on. Nevertheless there is follow-up. After every performance the animateur goes around the village listening to people's reactions. If there is firm support the action committee meets immediately to plan and mobilize people.

The reaction of the landlord is also assessed. The drama represents the first time the Harijans threaten the landlords openly - ridiculing and criticising him and asserting their intention to organise against him. It is important to see which way the wind is blowing - whether the landlord will try to stop the action being planned and if so how he intends to fight back.

Often the landlords' response is violent. They feel the only way "to keep the Harijans in their place" is through physical domination. On one occasion the drama itself provoked this response. The caste Hindus were attracted by the music and came to see the performance.* (This rarely happens because in most villages the Harijan colony is separate but in this case the two communities are situated side by side.) They watched silently for a while but when the actors began to caricature them they got angry and turned off the stage lights. The lights were turned back on and the play resumed. They repeated this harassment several times and finally the actors resorted to petromax lights. At the point where the drama exposed the corrupt practices of a landlord who happened to be sitting in the audience, he got up and ordered all of the caste Hindus to go home. They left with him but later returned armed with sticks.

At this stage the drama was portraying the humiliation faced by the

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* During the performance I observed a landlord came to check on what was happening, from a distance. When he challenged one of the outside animateurs, the latter quick-wittedly responded: "Oh, we're from the government's Song and Drama Division".

Harijan community in having to take their dead to the graveyard through the fields. (There is no road to their graveyard and the caste Hindus won't allow them to pass along the main road). The actors had moved out of the stage area carrying the dead body and had formed a funeral procession with the audience joining in behind them. When they started to walk towards the landlords' fields, the caste Hindus used this as an excuse to attack and a huge fight erupted. The Harijans reported this incident to the police the following day and a case was filed under the Untouchability Act.

In retaliation the landlords increased the pressure, refusing to give the Harijans work and making false allegations to government about the animateur. The Harijans were forced to look for work in neighbouring villages and one day on their return journey, they were attacked and beaten, one receiving a knife wound. When the Harijans complained to the authorities, they sent two police trucks and arrested 37 Harijans (including the animateur) and 49 caste Hindus. Those arrested were beaten in the police station and ACPC was blamed for causing the trouble and banned from operating in the area. ACPC mounted a solidarity campaign of letters and telegrams and arranged for bail. The Harijan community itself didn't give up. During this period they organized a successful strike with the help of Harijans in neighbouring villages and refused to provide drumming and music at caste Hindu funerals. When the case finally came to court the charge against the Harijans was quashed and the caste Hindus were fined R5,000 each. The authorities organised a meeting to resolve the tension and the landlords were forced to give a written promise to raise their wages (from R2.50 to R4 per day), to stop the beatings, and to cooperate with them. (Ravi, 1979).

COMPARISON AND ANALYSIS

In this final section the three programmes - the Song and Drama Division (SDD), Jagran, and Action for Cultural and Political Change (ACPC) - will be analysed in comparative terms. The origins and objectives, organizational structure, communication model, programme content, and programme process will be examined in turn.

Origins, Objectives, and Audience

SDD was created as one means of consolidating the state's authority, of advancing its programme and enlisting support for it. More specifically its purpose was to propagate the major themes of government's modernization strategy - savings, capital-intensive agricultural production, family planning, etc. While adopting the mass campaign approach of China and Russia, it left out a critical ingredient - mass mobilization and active participation of the people. Without this vital component it has become essentially an exercise in top-down propaganda and bureaucratic paternalism controlled and run by development planners: "Here is what government can offer you. It is up to you to participate as individuals in making use of the services provided." Development is something that planners/governments do for and to rural people through communication. In this SDD accepts a modernization framework and sees its work in terms of a) changing traditional attitudes and habits which impede development and b) informing people about government services and programmes.

Jagran is not a state institution but it does have many of the same social origins, modernization ideas, and goals of the SDD. Its initial economic benefactor was the powerful American-funded, family planning lobby and its initial work was to promote their idea of the "happy small family". Since basing their work permanently in the slums of Delhi, Jagran has added a community development objective (getting people to improve their situation through collective effort, eg. the maintainance of water taps) and has continued its initial work, on a broader set of themes, of changing traditional or negative behaviour and advertising the availability of government services. One new measure over the last few years has been a token objective of conscientization and politisation.

In both of these cases the use of the performing arts was not seen as a strategy of conscientization, of making the poor challenge their situation. The SDD was devised as a form of mass information, as a means of legitimizing the policies and practices of the Congress government. In the 60's with the growing pressure from the international family planning lobby, SDD and Jagran's media work was seen as an important strategy in getting to the rural and urban poor who had been by-passed by other development programmes, missed out on the schooling system and were outside the reach of other media - the object: to convert them to the small family norm. This was not a broad-based adult education programme to increase their skills and socio-economic possibilities or to raise their consciousness. There was no material (economic) reason for a mass adult education programme which would make the poor more productive. Their growing landlessness, unemployment, massive migration to the cities, and marginalization in the cities demanded a means of containing their social discontent. SDD's and Jagran's role was to anaesthetise them, to socialize them to accept a compliant role in the system (eg. getting them to work together in maintaining the few community water taps rather than demanding better facilities, blaming themselves for their reproductive habits rather than struggling against the exploitation and unjust structures, etc.). It was a form of self-help social welfare, social control, and population control.

ACPC is concerned with fundamental structural transformation. Its social origins lie in the history of Harijan and other labourers' struggles against exploitation and ACPC's critical assessment and rejection of conventional development approaches of the state and many non-government agencies. ACPC's objective is to transform unjust social structures through organizing the powerless to fight against exploitation and for their rights (including services promised by government but not delivered).

It rejects the notion of development as handing out modernization packages and socializing the "illiterate and ignorant masses" to accept the modern packages (contraceptives, fertilizer, toilets, green leafy vegetables, etc.). It views development as a process of social transformation, of overturning unjust structures, policies and programmes. Its approach implies confrontation - a notion which is diametrically opposed to the SDD's assumption of a community of interest between various classes in a village.

SDD's focus is broad, attempting to reach the 'generalised' masses - all citizens without distinction. Jagran and ACPC, on the other hand, commit themselves to a more strategically defined audience - the marginalised, the powerless, the oppressed. Jagran and ACPC, however, part company over strategy and tactics. Jagran was invited by officialdom to work in the urban slums; ACPC chose to concentrate its energies on the rural workers, having discovered that the source of urban marginalisation is the increasing landlessness, unemployment, and impoverishment of the rural peasantry. Jagran responds to invitations by official agencies (eg. Delhi Development Authority, CARE, etc.); ACPC moves into an area only when it has been invited by the labourers in the area.

Organizational Structure and Performers

SDD and Jagran are both hierarchies: decisions and initiatives are made at the top and orders are passed down the line of command to the troupes in the field - the only difference is that Jagran is much smaller in scale and the 'general' often accompanies the troupe in the field. ACPC on the other hand is a functional collective: even though there are varying levels of skill, understanding and experience in the group, decisions are made collectively and everyone has a 'front-line' role, working and living in the villages. Structurally ACPC is a decentralized network of local area teams each with full autonomy over initiatives in its own area.

Operationally SDD and Jagran are mobile programmes dependent on itinerant troupes who arrive in a community, give a performance, and go. ACPC, on the other hand, works on a sustained basis in each of its communities and their cultural programme are not dependent on outside professional troupes. The villagers in each community, along with the local animateurs, produce their own drama.

SDD's coverage, in comparison with Jagran's, is relatively sparse; with a mandate to cover all of India its troupes are only able to visit each of India's 600,000 villages once every 6 years.[*] Jagran's work is more concentrated, limited to 16 resettlement colonies in Delhi. However, even Jagran's coverage has been criticized by its audience as too discontinuous and community members have suggested that Jagran train a group in each area to do the work. (Mehra, 1978, p.11).

ACPC and the director of Jagran share a moral outrage about the victimization of Harijans. ACPC translates this into a deep commitment which involves giving up the perks and easy living available to educated Harijans, working and living with exploited Harijan labourers, and sharing the physical risks of class struggle. Roy puts his sense of anger into his sketches (exposing the corruption of politicians and condemning Harijan atrocities) and takes them to the "forgotten urban poor"*, but these bold statements are always for the Harijans, rather than with them, i.e., growing out of their own analysis and sense of dissatisfaction with the system. Roy's moral outrage remains bold but limited to the stage; ACPC's condemnation of the system, is converted through conscientization, organization, and struggle into deeper understanding and action.

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[*] The above estimate assumes that the coverage of SDD's 20,000 performances a year is uniform. However a large proportion of these performances take place in district capitals and other urban centres; many rural villages, in particular Harijan colonies, never see a song-and-drama troupe Raghavan (1978) accounts for this relatively sparse coverage in terms of the low priority given to folk media by communication planners. He says that the song-and-drama programme is viewed more as a supplement to conventional mass media than a major, property supported tool of mass education in its own right. However, he also admits that "live performances are difficult and expensive to organize' (Raghavan, 1980). This is a firm contradiction of the conventional view that folk media is cheap: organizing folk media on a paid and mobile basis is expensive. Salaries and transportation costs eat up the bulk of the budget and limit the number of troupes that can be maintained in the field.

Roy's conviction and commitment is not absorbed by his actors who, like the SDD troupes, take a more mercenary approach to the work: they join Jagran to learn some skills which might be marketable in TV or film acting and to earn some income. In SDD's case, the lack of commitment by the performers is admitted to be one of its major problems:

> The performers are associated with the work for monetary considerations. The results that can be achieved are self-evident. The performances go on but no advancement is made. The edge has never been able to achieve a cutting sharpness. (Naarayan, 1974).

The commodification and commercialization of folk theatre is the main problem: development becomes a business of disbursing contracts, of hiring a certain number of troupes for a certain number of performances, rather than a complex process of bringing about social change. The performers become mercenaries - graded, hired, given a script or a message, and sent off to propagate something they hardly believe in.* This "mobile-mercenary" approach has been the major source of criticism of the SDD by Indian commentators. SDD might have gone in a different direction. In the year that it was founded, one of its early sponsors, J.C. Mathur, proposed an alternative scenario for social drama work, based on his experience of organizing the Mod Mandalis in Bihar. He advocated the development of an amateur theatre movement in the villages, arguing that a mobile song-and-drama troupe would "make almost as ephemeral an impression as a [mobile] film unit unless its programme included the organization of local folk parties..." (Mathur, 1954). By inviting the local amateur or semi-professional groups to perform with them in the village performances, exchanging songs and scripts, taking an interest in their work, and treating them as equals, the mobile troupes would, he maintained, facilitate the development of a strong, socially-oriented community theatre movement.** (Mathur, 1954, p.27).

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* Until recently Jagran's street theatre for the working class population of Delhi was virtually unique. However, over the last four years there has been a burst of theatre activity in the streets, open community spaces, and outside factory gates, agitating against rape, dowry deaths, lobbying for reductions in bus fares, etc. (Krishnan, 1980).

Some of these ideas were evident in SDD's early work. They helped revitalize some village groups and supported the community development programme of encouraging communities to build their own stages. However, after a number of years, concerns about "professional standards" began to dominate and the animation/training/mobilization role was pushed aside as more and more resources were concentrated on the development of the full-time troupes.* The resulting hierarchization of the troupes employed by SDD - well-paid full-timers operating in the towns and cities and the part-time troupes doing the rural work - has exacerbated the rural-urban migration of the performers themselves, with everyone aspiring for the full-time jobs on the urban circuit.**

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* The cynicism produced by bureaucratizing and commercializing development. drama is illustrated by various groups' accounts of how they attempt to maximize the benefits from the bureaucratic requirements - eg., one group gives every actor, including dancers, a token line in the play in order to take advantage of the higher rates of pay for speaking roles.

** Many of the organizing ideas are somewhat similar to those of the Chinese village drama movement in the 40's. See Judd's paper in this volume and Holm (1980). The Federal Land Development Agency (FELDA) in Malaysia also adopted an animation/mobilization role for its mobile theatre troupe which tours the newly created settlements in Malaysia, forming a drama group in each community. (UNESCO/IPPF, 1972).

In criticizing this mercenary approach, one can't blame the actors. Given their situation in the organizational structure, their response is totally realistic. There is no economic security for them in this work, nor is there any attempt to involve them in a way which fosters commitment. In the case of the SDD part-time troupes, the rate of pay is lower than what they would get from private shows and government's interest in them doesn't extend beyond their 20 performances of publicity drama each year:

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* The notion of the full-time troupes serving as demonstration models for the private troupes, recommended by the Vidyalankar Study Team (1964), has not worked out. The trickle-down effect has been as illusory in this field as in the rest of development work. Just as the benefits of the state have been creamed off by the more powerful classes, so too have the benefits of a programme partially instituted to help in the preservation of the traditional performing arts been siphoned off by the more powerful groups in the artistic community, with the part-time troupes making do with the bare minimum. To expect them to emulate the departmental troupes under these conditions is unrealistic. (Mane, 1980).

** The idea of a mobilization strategy (as opposed to a "mobile-mercenary" strategy) has been reactivated recently by several Indian communicators and adult educators. Raghavan (1979), Mane (1980), and Daswani (1980), for example, have all argued that the mobilisation of residential troupes is the only way of developing a mass folk media programme and this recommendation has been supported by a recent national conference on the subject (Kumari, 1980).

> There has been no systematic thinking and action for their continuous survival in their own environment, namely villages, fairs, temples, the ritualistic festivities.* (Mathur, 1977)

Training is minimal - in Jagran's case - and non-existent in the case of the SDD**. Jagran's training is limited to acting skills and there is no attention given to developing socio-political understanding and analytical skills; the training is functional, geared to a narrowly defined performance context***. In contrast, ACPC's training programme (for both animateurs and village leaders) is broad-based, socio-political in content, and continuous; it relates dialectically to the process of organization and struggle, guiding and reflecting on it.

The involvement of the SDD and Jagran performers is limited largely to acting. Unlike the ACPC animateurs who take part in all strategizing aspects of the work, the SDD and Jagran performers are left out of the process of selecting, defining, and shaping the message.* They are simply expected to reproduce the development messages they are given. There is no attempt even to dialogue with them about their own experience and analysis of the issue (eg., performers' own lack of literacy skills, experiences with family planning campaigns, etc.)**

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* A recent conference on folk media in India recommended that government take an interest in the long-term economic security of the performers (and not just their immediate usefulness for government's propaganda purposes) and "educate the folk artists about their rights and help them to avoid being exploited". (Kumari, 1980)

** The low levels of literacy of the troupes has been identified by many commentators as a major constraint on script production and rehearsal (eg., Naarayan, 1974), yet there has been no effort to provide literacy training for these groups. No one has recognised the powerful motivation actors have for learning to read - as, for example, Sistren of Jamaica has shown in teaching their actresses to read their own self-generated scripts. (Ford-Smith, 1981) The irony is that they're currently expected to promote the national literacy and adult education programme but nothing has been done to involve them in it.

*** In the list of 12 objectives for Jagran's proposed training programme, not one of the objectives refers to the development of socio-political awareness. The central function of the training is to develop technical skills - mime, script-writing, etc.

With only financial incentives to motivate them, many of the performers (especially the SDD troupes) do this work in sufferance; the meagre income they receive is the price they pay for relinquishing their function as popular expression, but they need to make a living. However, there is little personal commitment to the ideas they are expected to disseminate. As one song-and-drama performer put it when asked about the effect of his group's performances:

> We don't really know. All we can say is that when we do a good script we entertain people and when we do a so-so script we bore people. About what effect we have in the villages, that's something for the Government to say. (Abrams, 1975, p.404)

They resign themselves to their role as propagandists for purposes of survival, but their hearts are not in it - it is not their issue and the performances lack the dynamism of their own creation:

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* This may need to be qualified in the case of Jagran, but on the basis of the information available it seems to involve externally produced scripts and minimal actor participation in shaping them.

** This contrasts significantly with the Chinese approach to folk media work which treated the traditional actors with respect and involved them in discussing and thinking about the issues. The artists were encouraged to talk about their own experience of class oppression and to ally themselves with the peasants. This was reinforced by structural changes - eg., the land reform in which the actors benefitted. "The animateurs went into the communities with humility, a modest standard of living, and a willingness to learn from the peasants as well as to teach them." (Judd, 1981)

> "They will work for any government department, political party, fertiliser company, or local landlord who will pay them." * (Das, 1980)

The ACPC dramas, on the other hand, grow out of the situations, experiences, and analysis of the actors (who are themselves villagers). They are not handed centrall[illegible]oduced, pre-packaged scripts and told to perform. They create their [illegible] dramas out of their own collective analysis of their immediate situation and the deeper structures in which it is imbedded. This is a genuine expression of the people.**

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* One group of folk performers who have successfully resisted a propagandist role are the Bauls of eastern India. Their communication is "dialogical, horizontal, participatory, and emancipatory"; they engage in discussion with their audiences and reject both "a passive consumer behaviour" and "uni-directional communication". For them,

> attempts to assimilate the folk media and make of them 'extension arms of the mass media' ... can only result in a cultural conflict and the necessity of a cultural struggle. The encounter of the two cultures can only result in the disappearance, absorption or falsification of one of the two. (Majumdar and Roberge, 1979, p.10).

** One folk media claim is that it is a means through which communities "have a voice". In the case of SDD, it may be their mouthpiece - i.e., the traditional dramas that they are used to - but it is clearly not their voice. By accepting the role as a mercenary, as a paid spokesman for ideas they have no commitment to, the folk artists themselves relinquish their role as a genuine expression of the people. In this propagandist role they are no longer the "carrier of a community's history, values, aspirations, etc."

Communication Model and Programme Content

The two "camps" have diametrically opposite approaches to communication - the former is a "top down", "banking" exercise; the latter one of conscientization. The former puts across information in a one-way fashion about topics largely chosen by decision-makers outside the community; the latter stimulates popular expression of and discussion and action on problems identified within and by the community. The former is an exercise in propaganda - an active source operating on a passive receiver with the object of anaesthetizing people and persuading them to accept the legitimacy of the ideas they are receiving from the dominant structure. The latter is a process of engagement, of analysis, of questioning, of deepening people's understanding and resistance to the dominant structure.

Their differences are not accidental, a matter of selecting optional methodologies. They are determined by the ideological framework in which each operates. SDD and Jagran accept the modernization framework, i.e., of transforming the traditional sector through introducing modernizing inputs. This provides the rationale for their "banking" approach. The poor are poor because they are "backward" or "traditional": it is up to the modern sector (read the developmentalist) to overcome their traditional ideas and bad habits and replace them with new ways of thinking and behaving. This is necessarily a one-way approach because the poor have nothing to contribute to the interaction being "ignorant" and "backward". Their role is simply to absorb the new information, attitudes, and habits.

For ACPC the cause of poverty and underdevelopment is not the "inadequencies" and "ignorance" of the poor; it is the structural relationships which keep people powerless, subservient, and exploited. For them the critical problems of the poor are not those of "drinking, illiteracy, superstition, uncontrolled family, malnutrition, and insanitation," as listed by one SDD official (Ranganath, 1979, p.1). These are only the symptoms of their exploited and unjust treatment - the effect of their impoverishment, not the cause. For ACPC the key problems are those of exploitation, victimization, ostracization, and injustice.

For ACPC the problems of the poor cannot be solved merely by propagating modern information, skills, and technologies. "Banking" the poor with modern information and ideas won't get at the fundamental structures which are keeping them powerless and oppressed. This "development as modernization" process will only integrate them more successfully into the structures which are keeping them exploited, stifling their frustration, and growing discontent, converting their anger into self-blame, and redirecting their collective potential into individualized ways for adjusting to the system, or collective actions which do not threaten the system. So ACPC's communication approach had to be one which promoted an active rather than passive response, worked on people's anger and dissatisfaction with their situation (rather than anaesthetizing them), encouraged people to question and analyse the issues (rather than merely accepting the ideas and directions of the animateurs), developed their confidence, unity, and fighting spirit, and promoted concrete and confrontational actions which would demonstrate they could do something to challenge their victimization if they were organized.

Let us now take a more detailed look at each of these approaches to communication. SDD's approach is crudely top-down: this is best represented by the diagram on page 6 of Parmar's book, Traditional Folk Media in India, which shows SDD's vertical communication structure flowing from the urban development planner to the audience in the field.* The decisions about content and the choice of messages are all taken in national or district capitals; the job of the artist is to put it across and the audience to listen.

Jagran is a much smaller scale operation and its banking approach is not immediately evident from the Freirian rhetoric it uses to describe itself. However, an analysis of its process and the content of its plays gives a clear picture of its conventional approach to communication. To begin with Jagran often claims that its "themes come from the people". An analysis of the history of their repertoire, however, shows that it reflects the history of their varying sponsorships - Pathfinder Fund, etc. (family planning), CARE-India (nutrition), United Commercial Bank (savings and loans), Year of the Child (deprived children), etc.**

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* This contradicts one of the major claims of folk media that it is a bottom-up alternative to the mass media. In fact, it is used just like the mass media with centralized production of messages and limited local participation and dialogue.

** One might suspect that their recent addition of "conscientization" issues reflect their current sponsorship by relatively more radical funders - eg., OXFAM, church groups, etc. Their anti-untouchability play (Harijan) is not a revolutionary message: it is one of the same "20-point programme" themes propagated by SDD.

Jagran's repertoire includes few issues which would seem to reflect the priorities of the slum dwellers.* There are no sketches, for example, on, a) the landlessness, unemployment, and impoverishment which force people to come to the cities; b) Sanjay Ghandi's slum clearance and sterilization campaign; c) the exploitative and insecure working conditions for unskilled labourers; d) the inadequate services in the colonies; e) transportation problems in getting to and from work and all of the services based outside the colonies (eg. schools); f) hoarding and blackmarketing**; g) the problem of dealing with officialdom, etc.

Jagran's repertoire, then, is not a set of Freirian codes. It is a core of pre-fabricated knowledge defined by experts, which is, in Roy's words, "hammered into their consciousness". This "curriculum" approach to development theatre limits it to the kind of general education available in a school - a well-defined curriculum (read ideology) of those who control the society and not a content growing out of the struggles of slum dwellers for better working and living conditions.***

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* Those dramas which do reflect some of their major problems - eg. manipulation by local politicians or ill-treatment of Harijans - a) are not specific or focussed enough for a community to organize around; b) are resolved in ways that underestimate the socio-political constraints in taking individual action (eg. the problems in getting a bank loan, ration card, etc.); and/or c) focus on the symptoms, not the root causes.

** This issue was addressed only after they were pressured by local people into doing a sketch on this theme.

***Compare this with the identification process and use of ACPC's key issues on pages 447 to 449

The Jagran and SDD "curriculum" and the mobile nature of their work forces them to adopt a generalized approach to awareness-raising. Their plays are not the rallying call for specific actions or struggles. Their anti-untouchability plays, for example, give a general picture of Harijan victimization, but fail to bring out the specific injustices (eg., beatings, rapes, etc.) in that particular community around which the community could organize. In contrast, ACPC's plays reflect the immediate problems and organizational needs of the local community; their dramas serve the direct purpose of organizing to fight for basic rights, better working conditions, an end to ostracism, etc.

The major contrast between SDD and Jagran, on one hand and ACPC on the other, is the way they reflect reality. SDD and Jagran present a one-dimensional view of reality which is incapable of leading people to a deeper understanding of the structural context of their oppression through a process of dialectical analysis. Each skit presents one neat technical solution for a single problem, often in the form of a service provided by government, with no reference to the socio-political context nor any indication of the socio-political implications of the solution prescribed. If you have so many children you can't get on the buses — "Stop at two, more won't do." If you are exploited as a rickshaw puller, get a bank loan and buy your own rickshaw. If you have an unbalanced diet, eat green leafy vegetables. These easy slogans fail to address, for example, a) the economic circumstances (need for labour and old-age security) which force people to have large families and the issue of transportation itself b) the exploitation of rickshaw pullers and the red tape and corruption involved in getting a development loan c) the underlying political economic conditions which often leave people without any diet let alone a balanced diet.* Instead of giving a broader picture of people's material conditions, the political-economic structures which create those conditions, and the obstacles they face in taking individual or collective action, an easy technical solution is offered.

There is no use of contradiction, which would make people question and deepen their understanding. The answers are simple: adjust your behaviour in a certain way, use the prescribed government services, and work together to maintain the few water taps and public toilets and everything will be lovely. There is no sense of the real limitations on any of these actions, their implications, or of the possibly negative consequences. This is not a form of conscientization which gets people thinking. This is anaesthetizing propaganda, "educating the masses by influencing their subconsciousness". (Shiveswarkar, 1978)

Each of Jagran's topics are treated as discrete problems requiring a separate solution; there is no attempt to show their linkages (for example between Harijan victimization and alcoholism) or their common roots in the underlying political economic structure. For example many of the problems have their origins in the exploitative working conditions - eg. deprived children, alcoholism, malnutrition, etc. - yet they are treated separately and diagnosed in terms of morality or the behaviour of the "victims" rather than the unjust social structures which underpin all of these problems.*

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* The residents we talked to after a Jagran performance claimed that green leafy vegetables was all they could afford and that it was part of their regular diet.

Without bringing out the connections between problems, the symptoms (heavy drinking, malnutrition, borrowing money, etc.) are presented as the real problems and the crucial underlying causes (low wages, insecurity of employment, inequitable treatment, etc.) are deftly concealed. As a result problems are treated as technical problems requiring technical solutions (go to the bank for loans, to the clinic for contraceptives, eat green leafy vegetables) which only provide a partial answer to the fundamental problem.

Coupled with the technical prescriptions and slogans is a "blaming the Victim" attitude. As agencies serving an implicit legitimation and social control function, SDD and Jagran produce dramas which make the poor feel responsible for creating the situation they are in. This is done by distracting attention from what the dominant classes are doing to the poor (ie. by leaving out the historical aspect - their history of rural and urban exploitation - and economic relationships) and poking fun at the poor themselves. Through the character of Rama in SDD's Rama-Shamo dramas, the poor are ridiculed for their large families, their 'traditional' farming methods, their insanitary habits, etc. They are left with a sense of guilt, that it is their backward behaviour which is the ultimate problem and not the social system which pushes them off the land and out of a job, deepens their indebtedness and dependence through criminally high interest rates, etc. By restricting the scenes to the domestic situation and ignoring Rama's economic life and social relationships, the whole rationality for producing a large family is subtly removed and Rama can be blamed for his "irrational", "backward" behaviour.*

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* The 1974 and 1978 evaluations of Jagran recommended that Jagran present an even narrower picture of reality, limiting each of their skits to one message since they claimed multiple messages confused the audience. The example cited to illustrate this point was the double-barreled play on family planning and savings. The depiction of a family's increasing impoverishment due to more and more children was understood by many viewers as merely a warning against indebtedness.

Jagran's use of mime takes a similar direction. Unlike ACPC who use ridicule as a form of defiance against the landlords and a means of bolstering the courage of the labourers, Jagran uses ridicule as a weapon against the poor. Although their intentions are positive - they feel that seeing their problems and inadequacies exposed will benefit the poor - by focusing largely on the "defects" and "traditional behaviour" of the poor without showing how these are socially produced, Jagran undermines their confidence.* By blaming people a) for not eating the right foods and burying their money in the ground when their pay is so small they can hardly eat at all; b) for not limiting their families and not sending their children to school when their survival often demands extra breadwinners and school fees are prohibitive; c) for taking loans from the money lender when their "salaries are so small it's difficult to manage to the end of the month" (Mehra, 1978) and the national banks don't give loans for consumption or health expenses; people are made to feel inadequate. It is no wonder that some of Jagran's audiences

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* While on one hand blaming the poor for being "traditional" and "irrational", on the other hand SDD exploits their "traditional" sentiments (eg. affection for mythological stories) to convince them to accept modern ideas. For example instead of using rational arguments for Family Planning which address their material conditions and the socio-political constraints, SDD's dramas manipulate people's affection for traditional symbols and stories (eg. the military defeat of the 100 Kurawa villains by the 5 Pandawa brothers) to legitimate the notion of small families.

> assumed that the purpose of depicting their problems was to criticize them rather than to arouse their consciousness and motivate them to act. Some of these people felt that the problems of rich people should be given equal time.
> (Mehra, 1978, p.12)

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* While Jagran describes their work in Freire-type terms of "making people question their own situation, rousing them out of their stupour, and getting them to resist being exploited" (Roy, 1980), this questioning process has been to look not outside at the broader structures but within, getting people to examine their own "disabilizing" behaviour, as if it is autonomous and unaffected by the pressures of the social system. However, some of Jagran's work (eg. Politician, Harijan) does represent a protest against the ills of the society. The problem seems to be that Jagran has not discovered how to mobilize this protest and the anger of the people. They diffuse it by spending too much time emphasizing the personal "defects" of the poor which are in fact situational responses to the oppression and not inherent defects.

To them the main problem is not within themselves but the system which produces their indebtedness, alcoholism, delinquent children, insanitation, etc.

Audience resistance to "victim-blaming" or other forms of dominant class propaganda is not unique to Jagran's work.[*] The general reaction to SDD dramas seems to be passive resistance: they certainly appreciate the entertainment value but turn off to the propaganda. (Abrams, 1975, p. 404) They prefer propaganda drama to a speech by an official, but it's still propaganda and they treat it as such. They regard the performers as just playing, just performing for the income it earns having no sense of commitment to the messages.

Their reaction, however, is not always passive: because the SDD troupes were used in a massive way during the coercive sterilization campaign of the Emergency, many non-SDD troupes first arriving in a remote rural village find villagers running away from them, until they can explain they have nothing to do with family planning.[**]

The issue of alcohol - which is addressed by Jagran and ACPC - provides another point of comparison. In Jagran's dramas the men are blamed for heavy drinking without any reference to the structure which produces and maintains this drinking problem. ACPC, on the other hand, shows in its drama a) how men turn to drink because of the pressures of their exploited situation, b) the vested interests involved in alcohol production, and c) the landlords' use of drinking to maintain their control over the labourers. In the discussions which are woven into the drama people raise the importance of dealing collectively with the drinking problem as a vital aspect of organizing a successful struggle.

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[*] Many studies of the impact of dominant class media have focused, in a non-dialectical way, entirely on its manipulative potential without assessing working class resistance to it.

[**] The troupes also provided the entertainment at the large vasectomy camps organized during this period.

SDD's and Jagran's portraits of reality rarely depict class conflict (let alone class relationships). The overall image of society that is projected is that of harmony and co-operation, rather than of conflicts and division. Where conflict is portrayed, it is within the neighbourhood between poor people themselves or the conflicts within families. By contrast in the ACPC case class conflict is portrayed as the core of the drama and provides the basis for dialectical analysis.* By limiting their scenes to to the colonies (on the whole) Jagran eliminates the potential of using dialectics, of showing the differences between the working and living conditions of working class and middle class people and relationships between them. Where Jagran does portray class conflict (eg. exploitation of the rickshaw puller) it is resolved not through dealing with it (eg. organizing with other rickshaw pullers to demand a fair wage) but through an individualistic solution (getting a loan to buy a rickshaw) which itself poses some problematic class relationships (ie. bribing officials, etc.).*

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* The notion of difference - of dialectical opposites - is key to the ACPC method. It is the source of dissatisfaction which makes people question inequality and make demands on the system which produces inequality.

In SDD's case they resolve their class conflict dramas (eg. Harijan victimization) not through struggles by the Harijans to demand equitable treatment but through a paternalistic, "change-of-heart" response by an individual landlord. In contrast ACPC's dramas show how unrealistic the above solution is: that landlords are locked into their class position, that it is difficult for them to move outside their class interests in order to treat a labourer in a non-exploitative way. They exploit the Harijan not as a matter of will or choice - their position in the system demands this way of behaving. Landlords resist caste reforms precisely because caste discrimination is closely linked with economic exploitation.

In both cases SDD and Jagran present unrealistic proposals for solving the problems of working class people because they fail to consider the real constraints and possibilities within the power structure. They are too neat, too simple: they assume that the bureaucracy will respond quickly to provide the services and legal provisions promised or that the local power structure will not attempt to interfere with the way in which these services and laws are implemented.* The ACPC dramas on the other hand show that it is unrealistic for Harijans to wait for a landlord's change of heart to get better treatment or to expect a bureaucrat to provide house sites, bonded labour reforms, etc. without a certain amount of collective pressure. Their dramas show people how to pressure the landlords and civil servants for better working and living conditions. Where SDD and Jagran limit themselves to giving the poor information on government services and reforms, ACPC shows them (in the drama) and actually organizes them to assert their legal rights and demand those services and reforms.

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* After the Jagran performance that I observed, I asked to meet with a few audience members to discover their reactions. When I asked about their feelings towards family planning, one woman started to describe the brutal treatment her husband had received in being sterilized during the Emergency. The Jagran director interrupted immediately and said - "This woman is dominating the discussion" and then beamed with pride when another woman spoke up in praise of family planning.

Programme Process

ACPC's cultural programme is an integral part of a total social transformation process (conscientization, leadership development, organizing, and struggle) and its "actors" are animateurs and villagers: acting is only one of their tasks and it is integrated into their total animation process. SDD's and Jagran's dramas are "one-off" events and the actors are primarily performers - their job is to put on a good show and once it's over to hit the road.*

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* Or that the problems will go away if the poor simply rehabilitate themselves, adopting modern habits and behaviour.

ACPC dramas are rough-and-ready sketches acted out by members of the community expressing their problems and provoking discussion on the source of their problems and what needs to be done. Jagran and SDD's dramas are polished "well-finished plays" performed by outsiders presenting both an outsider's view of people's problems and a solution.** The former has a rough story-line worked out by the village actors beforehand which leaves lots of room for improvisation, changes in plot, and dialogue with the audience, including lots of sequences where the audience takes over the drama. The latter is a scripted or at least a tightly controlled play with no audience participation. In the former the audience work out their own solution in the course of the drama; in the latter the solution is pre-packaged and ready to be consumed.

In the ACPC cultural action programme, discussion is woven into the drama, takes place between scenes, and is organized when the dramas are over; its object - to deepen people's understanding of the issues and to talk about what might be done about the problem and organizing to do something. The Jagran or SDD cultural event is structured primarily as a performance. Any form of interaction with the audience is not a genuine dialogue but simply a form of message reinforcement. For example a Field Publicity Officer answering questions at the end of a performance is not attempting to raise the issues but to put across technical information. A Jagran commentator who asks the audience "How many children makes a happy family?" is simply extracting confirmation that the message has been communicated. Describing this feedback process as "dialogue" is as doubtful as calling a one-way performance "conscientization".*

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* The Jagran actors in fact have a much longer-term involvement in each colony, but their work is essentially communication and largely ends when the performance ends.

** The distinction between these two types of drama is clearly made in the Crow and Etherton paper in this volume.

In the case of SDD and Jagran the relationship between the performance and follow-up action is problematic. For SDD it largely depends on the enthusiasm of local development workers; SDD staff admit that co-ordination is weak. SDD and Jagran dramas primarily point towards individual behavioural change. However, Jagran also talks about collective action - but it sees this in a mechanical, linear way as flowing out of a long conscientization process:

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* Jagran actors also conduct post-performance interviews but these are for evaluation purposes (to satisfy donors) rather than developing collective discussion and action. In the SDD case post-performance discussion exists only on paper; the event is conceived essentially as a form of passive entertainment and the tight itinerary doesn't leave time for discussion and follow-up. Even if there was discussion, the programme's location just outside the panchayat would restrict open participation - only the upper caste, richer farmers tend to speak at these meetings.

> Before they can become organized and politicized their consciousness needs to be raised. It's a long process. The first stage is to bring in awareness. People are unaware of the possibility of change. If it is hammered constantly, the consciousness may bring about change.
> (Roy interview, 1980)

Jagran has no organizational strategy beyond that of bringing people together for a performance. They seem to believe that once people have been "awakened", have reached a certain level of awareness then an organizational process will develop spontaneously and people will take action.

This is in direct contrast with ACPC's work where organizing is a deliberate process and consciousness and organizing grow dialectically:

> Conscientization is not simply a process of making conscious. The permanent liberation of man and his full humanization are not worked out in the interior of his consciousness but in the wide area of history.
> (Von der Weid, 1981, p.50)

People cannot be exposed to awareness; it is not something you "hammer" into someone. Social and political understanding is only acquired when put into practice, but in addition it is learned from experience, from taking action. Action in the ACPC process not only flows out of but also constitutes "awareness-raising": marching on the government office and discovering you can not only make your case but argue back when the official shouts at you is as much a part of the growing confidence and class consciousness as sitting in a study circle or participating in an ACPC drama. Learning in ACPC is dialectical, leading to action and in turn being informed by action.* Learning in Jagran's case is a static, passive process, uninformed by action or meaningful dialogue.

Jagran attempts to cover itself by maintaining an ambiguous community role. While aiming to arouse community action, it resists taking on the organizational responsibility itself. (It argues that as an outside organization it is not its role to organize the people.) Its job is to "hammer" in awareness and if the community doesn't take action then they can be blamed for being "apathetic". While maintaining informal contacts with local leaders and organizations, its collaborative work with local residents' associations seems to be limited. (Fernandez, 1980) While it is true they consult local leaders in planning their daily programme, there is little attempt to put their 'theatre' directly at the service of the residents association - for example to rally support for a specific struggle or initiate a community dialogue on an issue.[*]

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* In the assessment of Freire's work in Brazil a misinterpretation is often made that his conscientization work was a precondition for political action, that it triggered off a revolutionary movement. In fact, as Freire has clarified in Pedagogy in Process, his work evolved in response to peasant and worker struggles (1978, p. 110). Thus conscientization became an additional tool for deepening class consciousness, sharpening the perception of the contradictions in the social relations of production and heightening worker's struggle (which was already going on).

Jagran and SDD motivate people to make individual use of the available government services (clinics, family planning, fertilizer, loans, savings schemes, house sites, etc.). ACPC as one form of struggle, develops popular organizations to confront government and demand these services which, due to official corruption or sheer inertia are not available or are appropriated by the rich landowners. Collective actions promoted by Jagran - eg. collective maintenance of water taps - are not challenges against the system.[**] They are the classical forms of 'self-help' community development which are used by the state to control people's collective energies and to divert them from pressuring government for adequate services.[***]

Jagran's response to evaluation findings showing few collective actions stimulated by their work is that people are apathetic. People are blamed for not taking action as if apathy is a self-inflicted characteristic of urban squatters.[*] Without a clear explanation of its historical and socio-political roots, apathy takes on the function of an explanatory cause of poverty, rather than being understood as a response to an inequitable social structure. In this way the Freirian concept of a "culture of silence" is converted into the "blaming the victim" ideology of conventional development work. Slum-dwellers are "underdeveloped" because they are "apathetic" and "resistant to change"; Jagran's role then is to "awaken" them, "to arouse them out of their stupour". If they don't act, then it means they are still "apathetic" and more consciousness needs to be 'hammered' into them.[**]

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[*] In the SDD case there is no on-going structure or organization within which the members of the audience can deepen their understanding of the issues and take collective action. Neither the itinerant troupe nor the government information officer are in a position to develop such an on-going structure.

[**] Where they do talk about revolution they keep it on the stage. ACPC, on the other hand, rehearses a struggle on the stage and then goes and carries it out.

[***] Another example of community action stimulated by a Jagran performance was a self-help cleaning campaign during a sweeper strike. But as a form of strike-breaking this too reinforces the status quo, undermining the struggle of the exploited Harijan sweepers. (Lambert, 1981)

Jagran seems to define "apathy" as the condition of a) not taking up the services and opportunities available from government or b) lack of co-operation in using the colony's water and sanitation facilities. Instead of regarding people's inaction in the above prescribed way as something negative, it may in fact be a totally positive response, a form of resistance to the manipulative purposes of the state which destroyed people's homes and original community (in which they had a strong organization of their own) and now want to control popular organizations so their energies are channeled in harmless self-help actions rather than struggles for basic rights, adequate facilities, better working conditions, etc.* Apathy is not a self-induced phenomenon; it is a historical outcome of social control policies of the dominant class.

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[*] This view of apathy is different from Freire's. Apathy in a Freirian sense can only be defined in dialectical terms - as a response to oppressive relations. Peasants are "apathetic" only in the sense that they have been forced to internalize the oppressor's ideology, to accept a subservient and passive role within an exploitative structure.

[**] Jagran is a good example of pseudo-Freirian methodology. It incorporates Freire's ideas, at least the rhetoric, into its work without making any basic adjustments to their propaganda work. By sleight-of-hand Freirian problem-posing becomes converted into problem-prescribing, critical thinking into slogan 'banking', and collective struggle into maintaining the totally inadequate facilities provided by government.

CONCLUSION

These case studies have shown that theatre can be used on one hand as a medium for dictating the views and prescriptions of the dominant class; legitimizing the system and controlling people's participation in it; shifting the blame for poverty from the oppressive structures to the "self-impoverishing" poor; and anaesthetizing people so that they participate uncritically in reproducing the apparatus of domination. However theatre can also be used as part of a social transformation process in which the oppressed express their problems and grievances, deepen their understanding of the exploitative social structure, and build confidence, class consciousness, and power through organizing and struggling against oppression.

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* In their original squatter areas they were highly organized and had evolved effective methods of communal decision-making and collective action for self-defence. (Singh, 1977) This was their organizational basis for resistance to the sterilization drive during the Emergency. The violent move to the resettlement colonies fragmented them and smashed their organizations. It is no wonder they are reluctant to build new ones in the bureaucrat's mould.

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POPULAR THEATRE, POPULAR EDUCATION, AND URBAN COMMUNITY ORGANIZING IN MEXICO[1]

by

Carlos and Graciela Nuñez

This is a detailed case study of the educational and cultural work of Instituto Mexicano para el Desarrollo Comunitario (IMDEC), a non-government organization working in popular education and community organizing in the urban working class neighbourhoods of north-western Mexico. It will begin with a description and analysis of a) the socio-political context at the national and local levels and b) IMDEC's overall educational and organizational programme, using as an example its project in the community of Santa Cecilia; then it will focus more specifically on the educational-cultural aspect, both its theoretical approach and practical methodology.

BACKGROUND

National Context

Mexico, with 70 million inhabitants, is, after Brazil, the most populous country in Latin America and the third in geographic surface area.

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[1] Editor's Note: The original case study produced for the Berlin Seminar was 78 pages in length and included an appendix on popular theatre workshops in Nicaragua. For purposes of this volume, the paper had to be shortened and in the process the Nicaraguan section was cut out. The original paper can be obtained from Carlos and Graciela Nuñez, IMDEC, Av. Chapultepec Sur 52, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. Part of the section on the Nicaraguan popular theatre workshops is included in the Latin American working group report.

It is a country of great social contrasts, where differences between rich and poor are scandalous; there does exist, however, a numerous middle class, the product of a growing process of industrialization.

The contrasts are to be seen as well in many other aspects, for example on a regional level where geographic, climatic, ethnic, economic, and cultural differences represent several "countries" enclosed within one. At the ethnic level, Mexico maintains an indigenous population of 3.5 million, speaking 30 different languages.

In spite of the Revolution of 1910, the conditions of exploitation, marginality, and cultural domination are no different from those in many other countries of the region, because in fact the Revolution was appropriated by the Oligarchy, who allowed Mexico to be over-run by North American imperialism.

In synthesis, Mexico has become an underdeveloped capitalist society dependent upon national oligarchic and transnational interests (5.2% of the major enterprises represent foreign capital). There is unbalanced development based on monopolistic principles both in the economic and political spheres.

This contradicts its international image which is one of liberty, independence and solidarity. This image is, of course, justified with respect to its external policies - eg. Mexico's support for Cuba, Allende's Chile, Nicaragua, etc. However, its internal politics, though better than in most other Latin American countries, leaves much to be desired. The critical situation in which the indigenous population, farm and factory workers live, the selective repression (and in some areas, as in Chiapas, the open repression) and the political manipulation needs to be thoroughly examined for it is in this context that IMDEC's work has developed.

Local Context: Guadalajara

The city of Guadalajara in which IMDEC is based is an urban center with many of the characteristics that typify cities in underdeveloped and dependent countries.

Nevertheless, Guadalajara has its own unique characteristics based on its historical origins. It was established during the colonial era as a political, military and religious centre. Later it consolidated this situation, becoming the chief financial, commercial and administrative centre for the entire western region of Mexico, receiving all surplus produced in the area and transferring it to the more developed centres of the economy. It is a service centre, rather than an industrial city, with commerce, finance, and banking playing dominant roles. Over the last two decades this commercial interest has been largely directed towards real estate speculation made possible by the monopoly on land and the astute management of what is a captive market.

The population has risen dramatically over the last three decades, increasing from 377,000 in 1950, to over two million in 1980, largely through migration from the rural areas. The financial, commercial, and real estate interests have benefitted from this migration, turning the settlement of migrants into a profitable business and pre-empting the possibility of violent property takeover (eg. squatter possession) that is common in other parts of Mexico and Latin America.

Up until the 70's this settlement of migrants was carried out through private land development. Four or five groups of land monopolists, in collaboration with the commercial and financial interests and with the collusion of civic authorities, 'developed' large areas of land to settle the thousands and thousands of new migrants. The land was divided into lots and sold on an individual basis with minimal or non-existent services (in violation of the law) at vast profits to the speculators. Organized resistance to these exploitative conditions was avoided by the individualized approach to settlement: the migrants competed with one another for land and their political loyalties were manipulated for favours in getting services.

In a few words: economically the small surplus of the "under-employed" was captured; politically this population in transition from rural to urban was "declassed"; ideologically a marked individualism was fostered which is contrary to the collective characteristics of city life.

These characteristics, in conjunction with the great mobility of the popular masses produced by their lack of roots in the land and the difficulties in getting house sites and services has influenced the type of methodology adopted by IMDEC.

In the 70's due to the scarcity of urban land the 'developers' turned to peri-urban rural land as the source of further speculation - in particular communal property known as ejidos. Ejidos were established as a result of the agrarian reform following the Mexican Revolution of 1910. In theory they are protected by the Mexican Constitution and the Agrarian Reform Law which prohibits the sale or rental of ejidal property; in practice, due to the corruption of political authorities in collusion with dominant economic interests, ejidos have become part of the urban real estate market.

The Mexican Government, instead of putting an end to this practice, has recognised and slowly legalised it, using it as a demobilizing pressure to suppress attempts at collective organization. The "sale" is on an individual basis and thereby demobilizing, while the purchasing population is further subject to greater pressures and/or repression by virtue of holding "illegal" possession of the land. There is no property title or deed and there are no public services whatsoever.

The guilty party, on the other hand, is paid for the land he sold, and by such achieves a double payment; this double payment then must be met directly by the purchaser who first must pay the seller and then once again make payment but this time through the organism created by Government to legitimize and legalize the fraud.

Both of these forms of settlement - private land development and the sale of ejidos - have produced a large amorphous urban mass: individualistic, lacking in class consciousness, highly mobile, living under serious pressure, and badly exploited yet at the same time, desperate and capable of a certain resistance which shows the underlying potential for and consciousness of struggle.

The Economic Context

Guadalajara is a service centre rather than an industrial city. Although industrialization is rapid and accelerating, 90% of the existing 6,170 factories were founded after 1959 - only 7% of these can be considered major industries (eg. 5,750 of these factories employed an average of only 20 workers per factory). Factory production in Guadalajara represents 5% of national industrial production, although in some commodities, footwear for example, Guadalajara constitutes the primary national production centre. The heavy industries are branch plants of transnational companies, producing parts (eg. transistors for computers) for the main production process which takes place in the U.S.A. The secondary sector embraces 38.6% of the economically active population, while the tertiary represents 59.9%.

A form of production which has flourished in Guadalajara, taking advantage of the vast and unorganized pool of migrant labour is maquila - cottage industries or semi-industrial workshops which function in precarious conditions, producing partial products for brand names backed by a commercial firm (for marketing purposes) but without any backing from a major industrial plant. This sort of partial product enterprise has neither adequate installations nor the required machinery to achieve a level of competitive efficiency. It is only able to compete in the marketplace through super-exploitation of the labour force: piecework payments, salaries below the minimum wage, excessively long working hours, lack of benefits such as hospital insurance, housing programs, etc.

In some instances, the "maquila" enterprise is undertaken as the principal economic activity of the family, while in others it represents a chance or random salary opportunity, and as such means that conditions can be carried to even further extremes. The more the process of production depends on the artisan, the greater is the supply of labour, and therefore the lower the remuneration.

In these fierce conditions of exploitation the family's situation worsens; they are forced to employ more and more family members in the family workshops, and to restrict the number of children going to school. Often the family sacrifices the education of the majority to get one or two members highly educated in the hope that this will provide a solution to their economic problems.

From the socio-political point of view, the maquila worker is prevented from seeing his working conditions objectively, because he is ignorant as to production processes, is isolated in his working situation and does not belong to a union; all of the above make more acute his sense of individualism, a carry-over as well from his recent past as part of the rural production mode.

This declassing and deproletarianization is a continuous process, and the possibility that his precarious situation might change becomes more and more remote. Secondary conflicts between members of the same class appear frequently, due to the system of intermediary hierarchies within "maquila" production. In other words, an exploitative production mode can be maintained with no serious conflicts to the system which sustains it, given that, a) the demand for employment always favours the supplying party and,

b) the labour force is fragmented and lacking in class consciousness. So 'success' in keeping the city free of conflicts, at least in this context, seems guaranteed.

There do exist, nonetheless, serious contradictions which day by day become further evident and which are generated by a competitive incapacity at more complex levels (national and international), because when volume increases, it becomes difficult to ensure quality and timeliness with a diversified production system; controls and intermediaries must be increased, or the factors of production must be "joined together" with the foreseeable consequences. The "maquila" worker comes to realize, through the harshest of experiences, that he shall never prosper along the path he treads, and his work capacity stabilizes at minimum levels of productivity, making it more difficult for the "maquila" production mode to be competitive.

Nevertheless, in spite of these contradictions, the deeply entrenched and advantageous nature of the system means that the system continues to find new formulas to bind this sector of the population to these same grave conditions of exploitation, declassing, and fragmentation. By making this detailed contextual analysis, we have hoped to make quite clear that our task goes beyond a voluntarist or culturalist approach, and rather is based upon an historical and structural analysis of our reality. This analysis, obtained from theory and practice, has made us respond with a praxis which tends towards conscientization, politicization, and the organization of the sectors referred to, in relation to the above-described political context. In other words, our work, with all its limitations, is oriented to a historical perspective of social change.

IMDEC: ITS OVERALL PROGRAM OF POPULAR EDUCATION AND ORGANIZING

IMDEC is a private, non-profit institution founded in 1963 in Guadalajara. It works in the popular 'colonies' (the Mexican term for working class neighbourhoods or barrios) of the city offering services in training, research, co-ops (popular economics), housing, and popular communication. In addition, IMDEC has undertaken direct housing projects in the cities of Guzmán, Autlán, and Guadalajara.

Its primary educational tool is the 'Methodology Workshop' which has been run at 'territorial' level as well as being used in IMDEC's conscientization and organizing work in the 'colonies'. This activity has spawned "grassroots workshops" run and managed by the community groups themselves.

In the co-operative field IMDEC has helped in building links between all of the co-ops in the area and has set up a specialized 'sister' agency to continue this work. This new agency INCOOOC supports the co-operative movement in the western region of the country and participates actively in the National Cooperative Board, a national project which coordinates and supports over 200 popular economy groups.

In 1979 IMDEC created another sister agency, the Experimental Popular Expression Workshop (TEEP) to continue IMDEC's work in popular education, communication, and popular culture. TEEP produces educational materials (at its own initiative and by demand from grassroots groups), supports the creation of independent artistic movements, and organizes popular workshops in both ideological formation and popular education techniques. It develops and plans events, sponsors a folk club (peña), supports popular movements and groups through a "Mobile Peña" and undertakes diverse solidarity programs.

The Santa Cecilia Program

Santa Cecilia is one of the colonies in which IMDEC has carried out work in popular education and organizing. This colony was established in the period 1968 - 1969 by one of the largest land developers in Guadalajara. It is located in the northwestern end of the city right at the edge of the Oblates Canyon, a natural barrier to further growth of the city in this direction.

At present there are 50,000 inhabitants and approximately 5,000 housing units. The majority of the residents first dealt with the developer through a "promise-of-sale" contract; today most of them have cancelled their debt (payable over 6 years) and are homeowners. Others lost the original property and began anew or have stayed on as rental tenants. Most of the residents are rural people who have already passed through the transition process in other parts of the city. There is high unemployment and underemployment and low levels of income.

IMDEC began its program in Santa Cecilia in the first months of 1971, after making a political-economic analysis of the colony and formulating a theoretical framework and a starting methodology. The program took the following steps:

1. Preliminary Research

The team examined existing documentation (minimal) and interviewed a team of nuns working in the colony and a few residents.

2. Field Research

Team members (*promotores*) conducted a survey of the colony and its housing units, recording on maps, a) constructed areas, b) non-constructed areas, c) materials used, d) the construction process, e) stoves, f) television, etc. This physical research served to familiarize team members with the area and to confirm IMDEC's original hypothesis, i.e., that most of the homes had been built by the residents themselves with very little advice or assistance and with serious limitations. This led to the decision to set up a "housing services module" which sold construction materials at reasonable prices and provided technical assistance to the residents in all aspects related to their settling in. At this same time the "emergency welfare service" was begun to attend to the critical human aspects of the population.

3. Research through Dialogue

Inspired by Paulo Freire's methodology, a process of open research was carried out involving a sample of the residents identified in the field research. The themes discovered were those of work, family, education, housing, religion, and politics. This stage provided a further means of orienting and training the team members as well as formulating a detailed methodology for the following phase.

4. Full Promotion Phase

Functional groups were created to deal with each of the six generative themes and the problem awareness process began. The decision to work in functional groups was at variance with the original methodological proposal which had advocated starting with a community-wide organization in order to show the all-encompassing approach to the project. This tactical decision, which grew out of the process, was made in discovering the concrete needs of the colony and the immediate difficulty of setting up a community-wide organization for such a vast, inorganic and unrelated human settlement.

5. Consolidation of the Groups

This stage involved an attempt to build relationships among groups; it was one of transition and conflict. On one hand the earlier work had created a number of divergent groups (co-ops, women's health groups, educational groups, theatre groups, housing groups, religious groups, etc.); on the other hand, the team, on evaluating its work, found a good deal of parallelism in actions being taken, and members of the team began to work almost independently. This produced serious conflicts in the team.

In order to overcome this situation, diverse solutions were sought: fresh training, reformulating objectives, drafting work plans, and above all, integrating the different groups and work areas already existent in the colony. At the same time, there was some thought as to the creation of a community-wide structure with a political dimension, which would be capable of imparting a wholeness to the process and of responding to the social demands of the community.

This concept of the "political" handling of problems, in conjunction with the internal problems of the IMDEC team worsened the conflict which had been developing with the nuns. The conflict came to a crisis and the project was halted temporarily in fear of transmitting the conflict to the grass roots. Some actions were continued, but parallelism grew; the Team suffered from frequent turnover and the process deteriorated.

6. Formation of an Assembly of Representatives

Some time later, fortuitous circumstances permitted taking up the issue again and hurriedly an "Assembly of Representatives" was formed, comprising one delegate from each of the 70 different groups which existed in the colony. This assembly fulfilled, at least in theory, the attempt to consolidate a decision-making body and community action leadership. During this stage the team kept itself at a distance, supporting from without the work of the "united residents" as the Assembly of Representatives was called.

However, little by little the Assembly disintegrated: area and group representatives stopped attending; the Assembly began to be used more and more for the negotiation of individual problems; conflicts grew within the leadership; the IMDEC team did not know how to respond to these developments; and ideological conflict within the team produced changes in personnel.

7. Restatement and Evaluation Phase

The failure of the "Assembly" thrust the IMDEC Team, by this time complemented by grassroots promoters, into doubt and self-examination. All of the phases of the proposed methodology had been developed but the objective of turning over the actions to the people had met with defeat. Functional groups had been created and services provided; some claims had been more or less successfully satisfied (eg. street lighting, drinking water); a cultural program of festivals and popular theatre had been successfully initiated. However, ideological disunity within the team and the failure of the Assembly called for a re-examination of the process and a new strategy.

In the face of this situation, the team chose to work with a small core group of grassroots people, clearly identified ideologically, to impose an integrated and political management line. This action proved to be effective: core group members became more active and their credibility with the residents of the colony increased. In short, this created a clear political tendency sustained by grassroots people.

An evaluation of the project process thus far was conducted and revealed the following:

- The theoretical framework had been too vague in its political content.
- The team, while espousing a non-directive approach, had in fact imposed its own objectives and shaped the direction of the project.
- The team had attempted to introduce a political structure (the Assembly) among depoliticized people and with no political praxis.
- The team on the whole, had been an obstacle to the project process, taking individual and divergent approaches. Due to the high turnover of team members there was a lack of continuity and common history within the team.

- Nevertheless, the evaluation showed that people's consciousness and participation had increased considerably.

8. Work by Objectives and Concrete Plans

Following the evaluation a new organisational structure was set up: the promoters as a team were done away with but some team members were retained, as support staff or technical advisers; a decision was made to train the core group politically (to overcome the problem of working with depoliticized people); a co-ordinating group was created out of members of the core group (of grassroots people); an educational methodology was drawn up and explained to the core group; a second evaluation, on the popular communication aspects of the project, was presented to the core group who thereafter took on this function; a community-wide organization was created by zones and blocks throughout the colony; this organization took over many of the functional activities (eg. housing, health, co-ops, etc.) of the earlier project and organised mass cultural activities (festivals, popular theatre, etc.), to involve the masses of residents in the issues and their solution. Mass struggles were organized to demand collective services and recover rights and these achieved considerable success which helped to legitimise the organization in the colony.

IMDEC's involvement at this stage was in a training and support role. Control over the actions remained in the hands of the grassroots people who ran the organization (in zones and blocks), the functional activities (co-ops, women's groups, health services, etc.) and the popular communication activity. Links were established with similar organizations in other colonies, facilitated by the different coordinating agencies mentioned earlier (IMCOOOC, TEEP, etc.) and supported by IMDEC's workshops in co-ops, leadership, popular communication, etc. These links helped to give the program a broader perspective, both geographically and politically.

Nonetheless, human faults and errors in the co-ordinating group, due to their political inexperience, created tensions within the co-ordinating group and among the different support groups active in the area. Ideological disagreement regarding the political direction of the program grew more and more heated, slowly breaking down the unity within the co-ordinating group; these tensions were transmitted to the grassroots leaders. National circumstances which are very difficult to explain in an article as brief as this, also influenced the educational-organizational process. The abrupt appearance of new political groups, the product of a national phenomenon and legitimized by the so-called "Political Reform" that the Mexican Government had used to control growing popular discontent, produced sectarianism which in turn created absurd divisions based on partisan militancy. The situation was further aggravated by the manipulation of certain leftist groups and religious organizations.

In time, this situation turned into a crisis, the division became irreconcilable and the program itself became divided, in the colony as well as throughout its broader relationships. At the time of writing, these divisions remain, with each group holding areas of partial influence. The overall effect is a loss of power by the incipient popular organizations, which were generated and supported by IMDEC.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON POPULAR EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Having described IMDEC's total program and the political economic context in which it works, it is now time to focus on IMDEC's cultural work. This also needs to be understood in relation to the political economic structure of Mexican society and the ideological conditioning of the popular classes. To start with, Mexico is an underdeveloped capitalist society dependent on national oligarchic and transnational interests. The mass media serve the interests of these two dominant groups, homogenizing the consciousness of the subordinate classes and helping to reproduce the class structure of Mexican society. This continual conditioning of the subordinate classes makes the formation and development of an independent consciousness among these classes very difficult.

In the face of this reality it becomes necessary to involve the popular classes in recovering and utilizing their own expressive resources, as well as making use of new modes of communication. Communication, used as an instrument of popular advancement, can generate a greater critical awareness of the political-economic structures of society. The objective is to create the will to transform these structures, through a broad-based and critically reflective participation of the popular sectors so that they become agents of their own development through organization and struggle. From this perspective, the communication media used in IMDEC's work - theatre, press, music, etc. - are only tools in the popular classes' educational and organising process.

In Mexico and the rest of Latin America the colonisers conquered the indigenous people, but they did not bend the latter's will. They destroyed many elements of pre-Hispanic cultures through violent suppression, prohibition, and punishment and imposed their own cultural traditions but the contact produced a new syncretic culture incorporating elements from both traditions.[2] This new cultural formation, however, is dominated by the values of the ruling class - these have been imposed on the subordinate classes and assimilated as their own, even though objectively they are against their interests. Yet, deep within, there persists elements of active resistance.

In dealing with the issue of culture, some have overvalued indigenous culture, accepting all of its traditions and values uncritically; others have reduced it to a mere culturalist and folklorist approach, treating it as an entity independent of the socio-political and historical context. Both of these approaches lack what we feel is necessary - a historical and class perspective. The latter is necessary in order to separate out, a) those elements of the subordinate classes' culture which strengthen their identity and resist the ruling class hegemony from, b) those elements which reinforce submission to the dominant class.

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[2] This syncretism has been converted into the object of study and tourist curiousity.

This leads to the *fundamental* distinction between people's culture and popular culture. People's culture is that which exists and manifests itself in a spontaneous and natural way through music, customs, mores, and values, etc. It is a culture dominated and absorbed by the ruling culture which has over time been able to impose its values. The dominant values are found mixed in with and superimposed upon others in an incoherent mixture, making it difficult to distinguish those elements which are genuinely popular (i.e. promoting the people's interests) and those which reinforce class domination.

"Popular culture", on the other hand, is that which preserves, rescues, and incorporates elements whose content is genuinely popular - i.e. serves the interests of the popular classes. It is that culture which strengthens ethnic consciousness and class consciousness.

The critical recovery of these genuine popular values which we find mixed together and diffuse in people's culture and the systematic return of these values to the people is the fundamental task of popular education. Popular education is a process of de-education, of overcoming the values imposed by the ruling system.

In distinguishing between genuinely popular values and dominant class values often disguised with a popular facade, an important criterion should be the ideological and organizational advancement of the popular classes. Another important yardstick is theory. What may appear to be spontaneous and natural, a product of indigenous creation, may in fact have imbedded within it values of acquiescence, of accepting ruling class domination. A theoretical framework helps in deciding which aspects serve popular interests and which reinforce the class system. This use of theory in making a critical assessment of people's culture moves beyond the limitations of a "culturalist" or "folklorist" approach.

In Latin America there are enormous, undiscovered ancestral resources which could become both means and end in converting popular culture into hegemony. For example elements of popular religion have played a vital role in strengthening the revolutionary spirit in Central America. One ritual of popular religion - "Dances of the Conquest" - is a reenactment of the Spanish colonial invasion yet serves as a powerful denunciation of current oppression and reinforces people's resistance from out of their religious-cultural expression. This type of popular expression is much more vital and meaningful than the abstract, elitist language imposed by the ruling classes or the intellectual forms often adopted by educators. The task of the popular educator is to recognize and revalue these popular forms of expression - theatre, dance, poetry, music, popular festivals - encouraging them and supporting their critical use as a means of popular communication and education.

Theatre is one of the most vibrant forms of popular expression. It is an ancient art, having existed long before the Spanish invasion and always accompanying popular struggles. The ruling class however have turned theatre into their own elitist, consumer good, using capitalist modes of theatre production. In response to this alienation of theatre from the subordinate classes, a popular theatre has been created. It takes two forms:

- theatre produced by a theatrical group *for* the people
- theatre organised *by* the people

The first type of popular theatre is brought in from outside the community by a theatre group. Its purpose varies from group to group - some do propaganda theatre, others popular education on a given subject, and others seek cultural identification and reaffirmation. Often it is followed by discussion - a "theatre forum" - which gives people the opportunity to analyse the message.

The second type of popular theatre is produced by the community. The actors are the people themselves - workers, housewives, students, slum-dwellers, etc. They investigate, analyze and produce messages extracted from their own reality which are then put before the rest of the community through theatre. This is socio-drama - theatrical presentations with themes drawn from the community's own situation - used as Freirian codes to provoke collective analysis.

Both of these types of popular theatre conform to the following theoretical framework devised by Leis (1979):

"Popular theatre must be popular, realistic, critical and free:

By popular is meant:

- being comprehensible both for the people as a whole and for the individual
- enriching and expanding the forms of popular expression
- adopting and strengthening the point of view of the most progressive elements of the people
- rooting itself in tradition and developing this in a positive manner.

By realistic is meant:

- demonstrating the real social causes of the problems facing the community and the people
- fearlessly raising awareness of suffering and exploitation
- dynamically presenting existing realities, projecting positive values (organization, community spirit, solidarity, human dignity, etc.).

By critical is meant:

- trying through dialogue to perceive the causes of society's problems and pose alternative solutions
- trying to create a critical consciousness in the people which will result in a critical attitude to the reality which oppresses them.

By free is meant:

- that the structure of the theatre and its method of functioning should be free and a part of the people
- that a theatre that is not free or critical loses its reason for existence, since it cannot act as a critical and free agent for change
- that the theatre must be open to continual changes, and to the integration of new elements and forms.

A theatre of this sort signifies being part of a process of social transformation. It is inserted within the popular organization, assisting in the process of constructing a new society.

Let us then move on to describe in brief the socio-cultural characteristics of the population of Santa Cecilia.

The Specific Socio-Cultural Context[3]

50% of the population comes from rural areas near Guadalajara and 30% comes from rural areas further away. Of the remaining 20%, only 6.6% are originally from Guadalajara, and 14.4% from other cities in the nation. Of those migrating from the rural areas, 81% have been more than 5 years away from their place or origin.

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3. This information is drawn from IMDEC's Evaluation of the Santa Cecilia Project (1976).

This means that the population in Santa Cecilia is not of recent rural-urban migration but have been moving from place to place within Guadalajara due to the critical conditions they find on reaching the city. It is only several years after their arrival and a certain degree of stability that they risk attempting to establish a permanent home.

Over 70% of the residents maintain strong bonds with their place of origin, and therefore their culture has both rural and urban elements. This mixture is by no means uniform, because depending on the time elapsed since migrating, the degree of relationship with the countryside, and the age of the person, the rural or urban tendency will predominate, but, in the end there will appear signs of this cultural overlay. This mixture produces conflicts, with habits, beliefs and attitudes shaken by the exigencies of urban life. This is particularly manifest in the behaviour of young people:

> "The young people from Santa Cecilia, and more specifically the members of the theatre group are not attuned to the real problems which affect their daily lives; they look only towards the city: fashion, music, movies, jobs, etc. They only live in this colony because their parents bought a lot and have begun to build a home. Their immediate aspirations are to earn money however they may - in a mechanic's workshop, shoe store or jewelry store, in construction, as sales personnel, etc. - in order to go to the city on Sunday and spend their earnings on movies, buying records and clothes or whatever fashion dictates. Those who attend school get a diploma in order to find a better job. They have the same aspirations as an upper middle class youth. They do not live reality as their parents do; they try to hide it, to hide their past, they do not wish to speak about it and if they do, they speak in a way which refuses to recognize the past, because it makes them feel diminished; their parents, on the other hand acknowledge that past and confront it without that sense of shame evident in the adolescents."[4]

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[4] From a field report on one of IMDEC's first popular theatre groups made up of young people. (1976)

The young people live in ambiguity, for on the one hand they cannot negate the reality in which they live, yet, on the other, they aspire to and try to reach that other reality that the city offers, largely shaped by the mass media.

The parents, being older and less educated, find greater difficulties than their children in finding or keeping a good job. This displaces the father as the primary breadwinner and this undermines his patriarchal role within the family. Many fathers resist this trying to assert their authority through force or threat, yet experiencing the humiliation of having to ask their children for money.

This patriarchal attitude is always the product of an entrenched "macho" mentality; it is the man (and the men of the household alone) who must be obeyed and served by the women, only the man who has freedom to move about, go and come, have fun. Women are not supposed to interfere in "men's affairs."

POPULAR COMMUNICATION

At the beginning of the Santa Cecilia project the social communication aspect was conceived as a support to the other field activities (group organization, coops, health, housing, etc.). As the project developed it became clear that the social communication aspect should be an important educational activity in and of itself and not merely a technical support to the other programmes. The conception of social communication also shifted from that of media used by the IMDEC organizers for putting across their own messages to that of tools for organizing, raising awareness, waging ideological struggle and assuring mass coverage used (and controlled) by the people themselves. This new conception required a transfer of popular communication techniques from the INDEC field workers to the people - more specifically to the community political organization which would make use of these techniques in their organizing, popular education, and political action.

This strategy of developing popular control and use of social communication depends less on the availability of appropriate communication techniques than on the organizational strength of the community political organization. The demands of the community organization at various stages of its organizational history determines the type and nature of the communication required.

POPULAR THEATRE

INDEC's work in popular theatre has taken three forms:

1. a formal theatre group
2. theatre used by the community organization
3. diverse sociodramas performed by various groups

1. Formal Theatre Group

The formal theatre group was the first experience; it was undertaken with a group of young people and followed the more well-defined paths of ordinary theatre activity. The group came together, learned some theatre skills (through exercises in body language, voice, etc.), and staged a simple play written by a single author, titled "Incommunicado"; this piece, although modern in style, was understood by the people of the colony, and at the same time served to train the group and build its confidence. The group then went on to create its own play, based on the immediate past history of each of the members of the group. This play, called "Thrown out there and kept down here" was about a family forced by economic pressure to leave the rural areas and come to the city where they experienced other forms of victimization and insecurity.

This theatre experience had a tremendous impact on the young people in the group who had up until then (see page 526) been trying to evade their socio-economic situation aspiring to participate in the modern urban culture propegated by the mass media. The preperation of this drama forced them to face up to their rural past and their exploited situation, to recover their historical consciousness and to lose their sense of shame about their rural and working class roots. It gave the group great impetus and inspired them to stage the play in a large number of colonies. Unfortunately after this experience, the group disbanded.

2. Popular Theatre and Community Organising

This was the second experience of theatre activity, and had greater impact: an already existing discussion group formed by married couples, adults, and young people of both sexes, began to organise around the recovery of rights in the colony. After a certain amount of internal discussions they decided to spread their knowledge and all their acquired experience throughout the colony: the medium they chose for this was theatre. This choice was triggered off by an invitation to dramatize during Holy Week, one of the stations of the Catholic Via Crucis.

The group accepted the invitation and began, at once, to reflect upon the content of the seventh station of the Via Crucis, which represents the second time that Christ falls on his way to Calvary. The group decided that the best way to stage this passage, would be to show that the image of Christ is present in the worker, the farmhand, the laborer in general, who falls time and time again, under the weight of injustice and oppression. Each of these burdens - represented by signs - is added to the Cross on Christ's shoulders causing him to fall; however each time the members of the community rush in to relieve Christ of these burdens and to help him up. This drama was very well received and encouraged the group to continue with this medium. In their second performance, which continued on with the same theme, they added an innovation: the signs which spoke of the workers' problems were acted out on one end of the stage while on the other the figure of Christ was lashed and beaten and weighted down with the "problem" signs. This performance - which was given during a popular festival - received great acclaim and stimulated extensive discussion.

The group decided to build on this strategy, using major annual events - e.g. Mother's Day, Father's Day, Independance Day, etc. - as the motive or circumstance for doing plays on various themes.

For example one play focused on and was presented on Mother's Day - an event which in Mexico as in other places has been exploited for commercial gain. The play satirised the message of the Mother's Day entrepreneurs, showing how mothers are abused and scorned the other 364 days a year. The play was called "Judgment of a Mother" and took the form of a trial in which the prosecution presented the appearances and the defence the underlying realities, thus giving a structural explanation of the problem.

Another piece called "Judgment of a Worker" was presented on Father's Day and focused on the problems of workers, giving them a class perspective. It was staged in a large number of colonies in the Guadalajara area and was seen by vast numbers of people. Two features of this play were

a) the incorporation of popular religious elements and
b) the involvement of members of the audience as a jury in the final scene.

Other plays dealt with

- Mexican independence, in which it was shown that, in spite of all the popular struggles, the conditions of injustice and exploitation remain

- the birth of Christ (performed at Christmas) which was given a modern and political interpretation. The staging of this play built on the Mexican tradition of celebrating the nine days before Christmas with pagan-religious festivities, called "Posadas" - it was performed nine consecutive days in different colonies of Guadalajara, along with other entertaining and liturgical aspects typical of "Pasadas". This same play was also summarised and printed in illustrated form in the community organisation's newspaper.

- the concept of popular participation and power (as distinct from electoral 'power'). This play was based on a real experience of a peasant community which, through the active participation of its members, was able to obtain political power.
- "Compadre's Day"* (one more invention of the marketplace designed to turn sentiment into consumption)
- health problems among the masses and the corrupt and dehumanized medical services
- the concept of surplus value.

In addition to these dramas on broad themes prepared for special events, other socio-dramas were created on specific issues requiring immediate attentio

A range of techniques are used. For example in the play on Mexican Independence slide-tape presentations on Mexican history were integrated into the performance. The same audio-visual medium is used in some plays to convey the broader national context of an issue, for example in the form of a news programme. Slide-tape presentations are also used in making the final statement in a play.

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* Translator's Note: in Mexico, the compadre is one's most intimate friend and/or in some cases the godparent of one's child.

Songs and music are woven into the play as a means of reinforcing various themes. Another medium which has been used is "shadow theatre" - the actors perform behind a screen on which their shadows are reflected. This medium was used in the health play;it created some very comical effects in the scene where the doctor is operating on patients.

The most effective visual technique has been masks. Masks are very much a part of the Mexican cultural tradition, manifest in ritual dances and in indigenous theatre. Conscious of this fact, the group used a widely-recognised Colonial codification in which animals (tigers, cats, and wildcats) personify the different social classes. Through the use of masks and humanized characterizations of these animals, the group created some works based on mime in which the fable genre acquired unsuspected political dimensions. The magnetic effect of this "theatre of masks" could not have been achieved through any other dramatic genre.

This was particularly evident in one training session with community leaders in which they were given (by the IMDEC trainers) income statistics and asked to work in small groups to analyse the distribution of income and present this analysis in dramatic form. Within an hour each group had prepared a short drama; one used mime in a brilliant way to explain the concept of surplus value and the way in which the ruling class makes use of it. This skit was later transformed, by the same group, into a much longer presentation for mass audiences.

This experience and others demonstrate the enormous potential of the people to explain in a clear and accessible language, concepts which intellectuals often do not know how to convey to the popular classes. It reinforces the view that theatre should be at the service and under the control of the popular organizations, created by and for them rather than being imposed from outside as a form of propaganda or agitation. Community groups often use theatre as a means of generating concern, understanding and popular support for various struggles. For example in the community mobilization to demand better telephone services in Santa Cecilia, the community organization, after studying the problem, asked their theatre group to prepare a short socio-drama on this problen. This was presented to a large audience at a popular festival, a means of raising the issue with a large number of residents in the colony. After the performance the problem was discussed and the community organization's proposal for action - a petition - was presented. This was discussed and agreed on and a large number of signatures collected.

3. Diverse Socio-Dramas by Various Groups

The theatre work linked with the community organization process has also inspired other groups in the colonies to create short socio-dramas on various topical themes. Sometimes these performances spark interest and generate support for a new struggle, serving to raise in a public forum issues which are strongly felt by a large number of people.

Popular Theatre Methodology

IMDEC's decade of experience in popular theatre has been systematized into the following methodology*:

a) Selection of the subject to be portrayed (generating nucleus)
The subjects are drawn from reality based on the pressing needs of the residents. These subjects are given a structural treatment.

b) Objective meaning (denotation) of the generating nucleus: Objective elements of reality are identified, departing from popular experience and describing the problems at issue in the subject. The nucleus is "broken down" into its components collectively, and the findings are put down in writing.

c) Connotation of the generating nucleus: This consists of the emotional, subjective elements which the subject evokes from each group member. It is at this stage where the dramatic structure of the play starts to unfold as each group member contributes characters to be dramatised based on their own emotional experience of the issue.

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* Some of the vocabulary used in describing this process is adopted from Gutiérrez' "Total Language" methodology (1973) which is quite similar to IMDEC's methodology although the two methods were developed independently.

d) Structural reading of the nucleus: This stage attempts to make explicit the structural aspects of the issue. It assumes that the group has some previous understanding of political economic analysis and involves analysing the connection between isolated aspects of reality (eg. alcoholism, drug addiction, unemployment, etc.) and the broader economic and political structures of society. It is important that the political economic analysis is presented in a simple and straightforward way: the object is to show that what appear as discrete problems are in fact part of and determined by the social structure of the society. For example the problem of alcoholism needs to be portrayed in terms of the economic interests which benefit from the expansion of this problem. This is a vital stage in the process: once the structural aspects are clearly understood, the drama is properly focused and the group is in a better position to lead the post-performance discussion. The "structural reading" is often done employing a symbol which compares society to a tree: the branches represent the "ideological super-structure", the trunk or stem the "political meso-structure", and the roots, the "economic infrastructure" (mode and relations of production).

e) Complementary research: In doing the structural analysis often there is insufficient information to make a thorough analysis (denotation) of the subject. This can be corrected through research carried out by the participants - involving the study of existing documentation, observation, or simple interviews.

f) Creation of the story line: Using the elements identified in the earlier stages, the group develops the plot, trying to find the best way of presenting these elements through a story-line based on conflict. The denotational and structural readings determine the contents.

g) Selection of characters and dramatic structure for the work: Then the dramatic elements and characters are selected, based largely on the connotation stage.

h) Casting of roles among the members of the group according to their characteristics and personal skills.

i) Rehearsal: Then the scenes are rehearsed, building on the structure and plan of action for the work which had been developed beforehand. The lines are never written but are improvised by the actors. This is a collective process with everyone contributing to the story-line, characterization, etc. suggesting additions, deletions, focusing etc. During this stage props and costumes are agreed on, keeping them simple and within the group's resources.

POPULAR FESTIVALS

The setting for many of the theatre performances are popular festivals. These events were created as a medium of mass popular education based on the deeply rooted tradition of popular fiestas. Originally developed by the IMDEC team they have been turned over to the control and running of the community organizations. The popular festivals are celebrated every fifteen days in the natural meeting place of the community, always out of doors. They represent a public tribune, a form of recreation, an opportunity for indigenous cultural expression, and occasionally a political meeting. Over 2000 people normally attend and they have become accepted as part of the life of the colony. In addition to the theatre performance there are dances, songs, audio-visual presentations, etc.

POPULAR NEWS MEDIA

The IMDEC team also created a news sheet for the colony as another form of popular communication. This bulletin uses a popular format and covers events of local, national and international significance. Major struggles in the colony are the focus for regular articles.

During the initial period the bulletin included a regular cartoon - "Thrown out there and kept down here." It was distributed free-of-charge during the festivals, as a form of reinforcement for the live media. As time went by the community organization took charge of the bulletin, producing and distributing it through their own grassroots members. Eventually it ceased to be free and was distributed on a cost-covering basis.

FOLKLORE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF POPULAR CULTURE

This activity took two forms: the first involved the creation of a group of folk musicians; the other approach was to motivate popular creative expression through contests in song, poetry, drawing, etc. which were publicised through the bulletin and festivals.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Popular education and communication should not be treated as ends in themselves, but as tools for raising awareness and furthering the ideological struggle, at the service of and under the control of popular organizations.
2. What makes these tools useful is not their sophisticated use but the degree to which they are controlled and used by popular organizations.
3. Popular educators often pay insufficient attention to the process of popular participation in attempting to make their "projects" effective. An authentic popular organization process requires the death of this project mentality.
4. Each communication tool is only useful to the degree in which it serves the needs of the popular sectors to reflect their problems and contribute to their struggles.

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WOMEN'S THEATRE, CONSCIENTIZATION, AND POPULAR STRUGGLE IN JAMAICA

by

Honor Ford-Smith

INTRODUCTION: WOMEN, THE POPULAR ARTS, AND JAMAICAN HISTORY

> "She lisper to me dat me name what me name
> dat me name is me main an it am is me own an lion eye mane."
>
> E. Kamau Brathwaite "Mother Poem"

In this excerpt from his "Mother Poem", Eddie Brathwaite describes the legacy of women's struggles in the Caribbean. The mother "lispers" to the son his name and it is a fierce name. He sees with the vision of the lion. It is this dreadness that will make it possible for him to overcome the threat and the destructive forces of oppression that confront his black manhood. But what of the daughter? Her womanhood? It seems to me that both the literature of the Caribbean and the popular arts of Jamaica merely reflect the serious situation confronting the Jamaican woman. Out of the contradictions imposed on the tradition of a very strong woman, a much weaker woman is emerging. It is this problem which I, along with members of the Sistren women's theatre group, have been trying to confront in our work in popular drama. In this essay I will attempt to show how the historical background has left a legacy of contradictions which have been reflected in the popular arts and literature. Lastly, I will describe, from my perspective, the way in which these factors have influenced the work of our theatre collective in creating our methodology.

Many of the popular arts in the Caribbean and particularly in Jamaica emerged from the forms of African oral and ritual traditions modified by the pressures of the history of the region. In the early days of slavery, men and women worked side by side in the canefields. There was little sexual division of labour (Reddock, 1980, p.4). Women shared the tasks of men and were regarded as being capable of the same work by the masters. This fact did not exempt the women from sexual exploitation by the white slave owners. Nor did they overlook the potential which the exploitation of the sexuality of women offered for dividing the children of slave women along lines of colour. Wherever it was possible, women's reproductive potential was used to the advantage of the elite. At this time, the plantocracy found it suitable to deny women their right to have children. They preferred to import labour. It was more profitable to do things that way in the early days of slavery.

The satirical work songs of this period which have survived united art with labour. The masters allowed this. It was seen as a means of obtaining better productivity. They were not so happy about gatherings which might possibly lead to resistance. That is why they banned drumming and rituals from Africa.

It is very significant that at that point in Jamaican history the person to emerge as heroine of the struggle against the white colonists was Nanny.[1]

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[1] Nanny's name is probably derived from:
(i) Nen-nen - from the Twi nãnã - grandmother and efik or 'ne' term of address to an old woman.
(ii) Nana - from the Twi nãnã, grandparent, grandfather, grandmother. A grandmother or any old woman: often as a respectful term of address. A Midwife.
p.315, Cassidy and LePage, Dictionary of Jamaican English

She was a Maroon (an escaped slave) who led a guerilla war against the white slave owners in the 18th century. She opposed their power on several levels. First her name means mother. She was seen and described by the Europeans as a witch. This came at a time when the witch hunt in Europe was just beginning to die down. Witch burning was one manifestation of the bitter struggle between men and women in Europe over the control of women's bodies and control of reproduction by men (Mies, 1980, p.36). Many of the hundreds of white women who were killed were nurses or midwives with valuable knowledge about the herbs and medicines of their community. In the Caribbean, Nanny was able to reproduce her people through her use of medicine. She was able to extend her power to produce life as mother, to a greater co-operation with nature in her capacity as nurse. Also her battle strategies required the use of nature, working along with it rather than dominating it. She used the waves, the trees of the region in her guerilla struggle. That is why the English said she had a cauldron boiling which you could fall into. On a second level Nanny fought for the right of her people to control their own labour. Third, she used the language and traditions of Africa, of the Ashanti, in her struggle. This was all the more frightening to the Europeans because it was unknowable by them. She named the reality in a cultural form. This totality of opposition accounts for the mythical proportions her memory has assumed.

There is evidence that what Nanny was in the mountains, her sisters on the plantations also were. Capital in the West Indies had long depended on imported labour, but with the advent of first the abolitions of the slave trade and then emancipation, an efficient means of reproducing the labour force was required (Reddock, 1980). At this time the sexual division of labour, which we have since come to accept as "natural" but which hardly existed during early slavery, came to be established. Women resisted the sudden interest in them as mothers and fought for control of their bodies. On one estate in St. Kitts, there were no births for ten years.[2] It was later discovered that this was because the women were using the okro plant as a contraceptive device. Again, in rural Jamaica, the remedy of calabash and marshmallow bush is still known as a means of inducing abortion.

After Emancipation, wage work became slowly established. There were fewer jobs for women and wage payment was determined along the lines of seniority, and sex. One example of this taking place is seen in this extract:

> "An able man in Portland contributes 3/4 or two days labour for a house and ground and wife 1/4 or one days labour for a house and ground, the children also gave 1/2 for the privilege of living with their parents." (Robotham, 1977, p.50)

This extract shows how the old plantocracy was slow to recognise the advantage to them of the new mode of production. It was something that was being pushed from the colonial office because of the industrial revolution in England. The new kind of capitalist interest was represented in the West Indies by the missionaries. It was the missionaries who saw the housewifization of women as a very important part of the domestication of black people. It was because of them that marriage became widely practised, according to Phillippo the missionary, after emancipation (Eisner). There was a deliberate strategy to imitate western forms of household management and organization in an attempt to guarantee the reproduction of a labour force which would serve the plantations. Domestic production on plots of land would complement the wages earned by the peasant/proletarian man. The women began to work in the home, neither they nor their children seeking what was regarded as "gainful" employment outside the domestic sphere.

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[2] Recorded by oral history in St. Kitts

Women of the labouring poor gradually became higglers, domestic servants, farmers and artisans. The mother, who appears in Brathwaite's "Mother Poem", is a figure whose power base is a plot of land in the country - a few acres, usually less than five. In a sense this plot became an institution of resistance. Many aspects of domestic organisation were in direct opposition to ruling class concepts of sex and legitimacy. The plot, or what Edith Clarke calls family land, passed from generation to generation, regardless of sex or legitimacy. It was shared between kin regardless of age. On the other hand, British law, in the nineteenth century held that women could not own land, that illegitimate children could not inherit and that the eldest male had the first right to land.

Edith Clarke pointed out that her evidence indicated that -

> "kindred, the blood relatives, in particular the maternal kin, as distinct from the conjugal household group is the most important institution in our community and often the only vital one. Nor is it any means as weak and disorganized as appears if we make the mistake of identifying the family with marriage and confuse kin or family with conjugal relations." (Clarke, 1971, p. 204)

By the 1950's, the popularity of marriage had died out. Housewifization is only practical if there is a male labour force whose labour needs reproducing.

And since labour on plantations was irregular the domestic plot had to hold far more strain than had been envisaged by the missionaries. It is interesting to note that by the time Clarke was doing her research women could lose their claim to family land if they married and moved away. So that while land is an important symbol of security, marriage is a system which threatens a woman's access to that security.

Women who farm the land seem consciously aware of the importance of their own autonomy (Brodber, 1980). They prefer to "make their own payday". They are strong, but they are strong in the weakest area of the economy. Their work is subjugated and dependent on the world of the plantation. The plantation has given their area of production a false importance - because of the fact that wage labour is so badly paid. The fact is that peasant cultivations exist on a microcosm of land in comparison to that owned and controlled by the estates (Robotham, 1977, pp. 53-55). The fact is that much of their labour is not seen as productive labour. The illusory power which they appear to have in the domestic world is robbed from them in the market place of the economically powerful. Children help them in the household, because the men do work outside the plot. And so the contradictory position of women reproduces the structure of poverty for the entire labouring poor.

The voices of women during the first hundred years after emancipation describe spontaneously in oral poetry and song the conditions they face. A woman in a song like "Carry me Ackee" is heard clearly as a voice of protest:

> Carry me ackee go a Linstead market
> Not a quatty worth sell
> Lord what a night not a bite, What a Saturday night.

Other songs of the time reflect an understanding of the resistance to bourgeois marriage:

> Before me married and go hug up mango tree
> Me will live so me one

"Elena and her muma go a grung" reflect the importance of child labour and the knowledge of domestic remedies passed from mother to daughter:

> Elena and her muma go a grung
> Elena start bawl fe her belly.....
> Go home Elena go home Elena and go boil Cerossee fe you belly.

The term "mother" did not even mean a woman with children of her own. It could be a term of respect for an older woman - this too perhaps has a material base in the business of shared mothering. The situation by which women could "take a child" of another woman and share the mothering. Though this was often a response to economic hardship the fact is that it released biological mothers from childcare and freed them (often to look for wage work as domestic helpers). But again the type of wage work was often unpleasant and work became drudgery and unpleasantness.

Another institution arising out of this situation was that of the shared network of skills in which women were able to call on the help of men in their community by swapping skill for skill. A woman would wash clothes in return for help from a neighbour in clearing her land. Women then were freed from dependence on one man and supported by the community group.

The strong voice of the mother - the higgler, the farmer, began to become more subdued in the second half of the twentieth century. In the development decades women's involvement in wage labour decreased, the rural poor became intensely disillusioned as their situation worsened, and large numbers of people migrated to the cities. Black labour began to move (once more) around the world to satisfy the needs of white capital. We hear in a song like,

> Alla me Sunday day clothes in a Kerosene pan
> an me man in Colon so far away

the voice of a woman distressed by the impact of migrant labour. Mother's plot is undermined and her voice begins to disappear from popular arts.

Mother's art was connected to subsistence farming and rites on the plot. Development strategies emphasized "industrialization by invitation" and gradually old fashioned, labour-intensive forms of cultivation became less and less viable. After 1945, the local commercial sectors increased and a local elite emerged from this group.

By the nineteen eighties 15.7% men are unemployed as against 37.7% women. Seventy percent of women between 17 and 24 are out of work and these are women with children. Sixty eight per cent of employed women are doing very low status forms of wage work, requiring no skill and are earning under the minimum wage. This situation is bad enough, but add this to the fact that one third of women are heads of households (a very conservative estimate) and the gravity of the picture emerges. Women dominate the service sector and many work as domestic servants - without access to unions or even labour associations. There tends to be a lower level of union activity in small factories such as garment and textile factories which as late as 1972 were paying wages of $7 - $10 per week.

Additionally, the level of broad-based autonomous organisations of women around questions or problems of direct concern to them is low. Much of the women's organizations are based on social welfare concerns aimed at further domesticating women. Handicraft and domestic science schemes exist, offering little chance for the analysis of whose interests these schemes serve. Much of the problem is complicated by the fact that the subordination of women has not been seen as an issue serious enough to warrant raising embarrassing questions about domestic servants or sexual harassment, for example. Often, the participation of women in the so-called "informal sector" of the economy and their work in farming and seasonal wage work is cited as evidence of the emancipated Jamaican woman. This blind spot has meant that much of the basic information about the condition of working class women simply does not exist.

Women have made important gains recently in the area of legislation. But these new laws do not deal with the material bases or the root questions of control of reproduction and control of production - or the difficult problem of the sexual division of labour. Minimum wage was an important piece of legislation - but in a situation where women do not do and cannot get work which is considered to be equal - an equal pay for equal work law is a bit like putting a bandaid on cancer.

The question of control of reproduction has always been seen as an important issue. But recently it has become an important activity of foreign aid agencies who require that third world governments control the reproductive capacity of their women in return for aid in other areas. Birth control and family planning are part of an international population control plan. In the third world, women are encouraged not to have children while in many advanced capitalist countries, incentives are being offered to women to have children. In both cases, the question of women's control of their own bodies still is essentially out of their own hands. Attempts by one group of women to struggle to regain that control is often used against another group of women. Today in Jamaica, as in many other third world countries, a woman from the labouring poor going to a birth control clinic is most unlikely to know that depoprovera is an inadequately tested drug, banned by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Yet it is by far the easiest and most readily available form of birth control for Jamaican women. Nor is she likely to know that the use of a coil can intensify her chances for getting gonorrhea, a very common disease and one which causes sterility.

Many women claim that they prefer depoprovera because the injection makes it easier for them to conceal from their boyfriends the fact that they are using birth control. This raises another important aspect of the question. On the one hand we see international agencies trying to regulate the reproductive potential of women and on the other we see that attempt being made in an opposite direction on the personal level. If one walks through downtown Kingston one can see the slogan "Birth Control - plan to kill black people" painted on the wall here and there.

The attempts on the so-called personal level of men to control the reproductive potential of "their" women is often expressed as a part of the assertion of national identity. That is, as the society struggles to liberate itself, to expunge colonialism, its men reclaim "their" women and so assert control over their natural resources. It is often pointed out that there is an analogy to be found between women and land and the way that both are dealt with (Mies, 1980). Women are often seen as a natural resource because of their ability to reproduce. This problem is a very old one and the search for its origins goes back to prehistory and the "world historic defeat of women" which Engels posed in his book, The Family, Private Property and the State.

The issue surfaces in Jamaica in the popular cultural force of Rastafari which on one level, has created a critical and a spontaneous protest movement which has given oppressed men a language with which to name their oppression, and begin to throw it off. On the other hand, Rastafari ascribes to women a restricted and tightly controlled role. (It is often not as tightly controlled in practice as in theory). Rastafari, by advocating a return of the black man to his African Roots, raised the issue of race and class in Jamaica with a clarity and power much more illuminating than before. Basing widely variant teachings on the interpretations of Marcus Garvey's speeches and writings, the African tradition and the bible, Rastafari has become in the last ten years a major cultural force in the Caribbean. It was the Rastafari drum rhythm, along with black American blues and jazz influences, which converted itself to the rhythm of the bass guitar in reggae. This musical form became during the sixties and seventies an important voice of protest against oppression and it was this voice that superceded the voice of mother who, in the language of Rastafari, became the daughter.

The spontaneous popular form of reggae voiced the consciousness of the alienated class, unemployed and angry in the city:

I hear you been robbing decent people's houses
Take 100 years
Judge Dread

Early on Marley wailed:

This morning I woke up in a curfew
Oh Lord! I was a prisoner too
Could not recognise the faces standing over me
They were all dressed in uniforms of brutality.

Reggae commented on Revolution:

I see the fire burning
Its getting hotter than hot
The haves are going to be
In the shoes of the have nots.

In "You can't blame the youth" Tosh linked current violence to past colonialism.

But Reggae didn't mention women. If it did it was in these terms:

Soldering a what the young gal want
Soldering......

and

I dub her on the big bed spring
Inna me three piece suit and thing.

There were, in the early period of reggae, few female singers. Those that there were espoused the ideology of romantic love with a great zeal and sang the remade versions of foreign songs. Nowadays, the process of commoditizing reggae music is almost complete. Reggae singers compete to sign contracts with foreign backers and they write songs for foreign markets about the more mystic elements of Rastafari or about legalizing ganja and although there is still an element of protest in reggae music its control by big capitalists has curbed its political potential.

Women then, are neither seen by the popular voice nor are they actively a part of it. It seems likely that the very weak position of women during the transition to new forms of capitalist industrial development accounts for this. Perhaps in part it also accounts for the way in which women allow men to control their reproductive potential on a personal and political plane, and goes some distance toward explaining why the reproduction age of women in the Caribbean is falling, whereas it is rising everywhere else in the world. Rastafari daughters who cover their heads and their bodies - while

> The dread flash him locks and a lightening clap
> and a weak heart drop

only symbolize one aspect of the forces of control in the attempt to domesticate the Jamaican women.

In written literature, many of the the innovations which occur at the popular level are incorporated - so that there is a continuum between the popular and the written. The situation of women is reflected with the same serious consequences. In *Ti Jean and his Brothers* Walcott's mother is on the brink of losing her power when she says:

> If you leave me my son I have empty hands left

The mother was characterized and recorded in Louise Bennett's writing. In *Labrish* the sanity of the mother is combined with some well-aimed *ginalship* (trickery). Bennett recorded the language of the mother and her verse was widely popular - especially in the forties, the fifties and sixties when she performed it all over the country. Significantly, the trends she began in literature have been taken further along by the dub poets who are young men. The domestic issues which Bennett raised and made visible to the public as political questions have disappeared from the poetry of the new generation of popular poets. It is not that issues of violence and class struggle are unimportant - clearly an understanding of them is vital. But with the loss of the voice of a Bennett, or rather the fact that her legacy has not been taken up by a generation of young women, in the same popular and immediate style of delivery, we lose touch with a whole series of vital potential possibilities. We lose the chance to make public and important what is often considered to be the private, non-productive domestic and "natural" labour of women. We lose touch with the question of how the subordination of women reproduces all forms of oppression and we lose the voice of a woman testifying about her own history. We lose the record of contradictions which Bennett had built into her poetry, the contradictions which have overcome and silenced her persona.

We can see then, that the struggles of the popular classes provided the basis out of which a rich popular tradition grew. Most recently questions of cultural decolonization and class struggle have occupied the imagination of singers and writers. It is this consciousness which provides a community of thought out of which the artists write. This community of thought reflects a growing lack of awareness of the specificities of oppression as it relates to women.

SISTREN: WOMEN'S THEATRE, ORGANIZING AND CONSCIENTIZATION

I want to move now to discuss the work of Sistren, a theatre collective of thirteen women employed as street cleaners in the Jamaican government's Impact Programme (an employment programme). I am writing here my own words.

I write "my own words" because I want to make clear that my way of working with Sistren is conditioned by my own position on certain issues, by my own class background and by my skills in theatre. All women are oppressed, but we experience that oppression differently in both extent and form. To ignore the difference between the actresses who make up Sistren and myself is to pass over the important question of class as it affects relations between women. Second, my position on certain questions has changed in three years or so of work with the collective as outside influences on our work have altered or become stronger and as the women in Sistren have studied and taught me more about their situation. Together we evolved certain techniques which I am writing now, here - without them - in words they would not use. These techniques are not necessarily the same that Sistren would use if they were working on their own or with another director. What I describe has grown out of the conflicts and solutions to problems of the last years' work. They cannot be randomly applied because they are aimed at bringing about a certain process and a certain end. That end is a greater consciousness of the conditions facing women in the Caribbean. That end is the possibility of changing the structure which creates those conditions.

There would never have been a Sistren if there hadn't been an Impact programme. I didn't consciously understand the implication of that sentence until August 1980, three years after I began working with the group. The Impact programme had been designed to give temporary relief to the problem of unemployment. One morning in August 1980 a friend happened to mention to me that the decision to hire 10,000 women as streetcleaners in the Impact programme had been taken because of the seriousness of the unemployment situation among women. Also, he said that it was thought that by giving the jobs to women, the wages would penetrate to the family. What I realized that morning was that in doing this, consciously or unconsciously, the P.N.P. government had made a space within which women could begin to organize around their own concerns.[3]

That is why Sistren spoke to me as they did when I first met them in an old, broken-down schoolhouse in Swallowfield, to talk about what we were going to do for a worker's week concert. I asked them, "What do you want to do a play about?", and they said, "We want to do plays about how we suffer as women. We want to do plays about how the men treat us bad". Somehow, the Impact programme had offered the women a chance to recognize that they shared something in common, out of which they wished to explore their situation as women. They also had a consciousness of themselves as representatives of working class women. That first time we met, I asked them how they suffered as women and we began an exchange of experience out of which our first piece grew. What was happening was that the group wanted to explore what they already knew, but did not know that they knew.

Downpression Get a Blow, as the first piece was called, set the tone of how the work was to proceed. One of the women in Sistren told us how she had worked in a garment factory earning a wage of twelve dollars a week.

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[3] In March 1981 the Impact programme was closed down by the new Jamaican government.

It was an American-owned factory and she and others in it were involved in trying to get better wages and better working conditions there. Women were laid off, paid off and some were fired for trying to start a union. She, herself, got pregnant and had to leave without maternity leave to have her baby, but she kept in touch with the other women. They managed to get outside support and just when they seemed to be getting somewhere, without a word, without a warning the factory upped and ran away (in the middle of the night to boot). This classic example of the exploitation of women's work by runaway factories in the Third World was added to, adapted and altered until it became a short play.

In those days (that was in 1977) we worked without written material until an interest in written material evolved and until we could use the scripts we had created. We selected our content from the experience of the women in the company as it appeared to represent women in the wider community. We took in material from women in the society and then later gave it back in a way which could be actively useful to others. We took old texts from life and re-entered them from a different direction - coming into the "roles" the parts we had been asked to play, had been given to play in life - with comments.

After Downpression, the company asked me to go on working with them and we began a training programme at the School of Drama. At this time, we had no specific plans to continue the work in any particularly clear direction. But during the training it became very clear that the women's lives and experiences, and the exchange of this, contained a whole tradition which had not yet been spoken about openly. Further, it was also clear to me, that Sistren were able to connect to a legacy of practical art which had been so much a part of rural culture and which had afforded women an important voice in the past. In the training, at that point, it seemed important not to impose a method of work, but to create in the community of the workshop, an atmosphere out of which the situation the women were discussing would emerge clearly. It was a method which would draw on a tradition which had grown out of an attempt to struggle with the powerful colonial system. It seemed that whatever was done should be done in a way that preserved and served the reality of the lives of the women in as immediate a form as possible.

In those first workshops I did a lot of listening to stories. I stopped trying to make things fit into improvisational methods that I had learned and started listening to stories. I recognised that the women like Sistren had delivered a cultural tradition which they now had to make use of - that in the stories they were reclaiming the institutions they had created under oppressive circumstances and which they wanted to make use of. By exploring ideas of child sharing and family support groups, the group could record a small part of the invisible historical experience of the Jamaican woman. It could also question the extent to which these traditional systems assist or impede progressive change for women. Of particular value was the establishment of a community of thought and feeling which with time and hard work, would provide a context within which creative work could be structured.

It was from these considerations that Bellywoman Bangarang emerged. It was presented at the Barn Theatre, a commercial theatre in Kingston because it seemed to us important that working class women should have access to the most authoritative cultural institutions in the country, that this would make their claims visible and bring their voices to the public. Also there is a kind of prejudice that says that because they drudge, women from the labouring poor have no imagination. We wanted to show that this was not only a lie, but that in fact women from the labouring poor often have better imaginations and better poetics than bourgeois actors. Bellywoman exposed and confronted the society with the autobiographies of four women who were pregnant. It dealt with the way in which they had experienced motherhood and the experience of being girl children. It raised questions of rape, domestic violence and domestic work. It showed connections between these things and unemployment, and urban poverty.

After Bellywoman we were able to define more clearly what we were about. At that time Sistren defined itself as a collective which uses, a) drama as a means to explore and analyse the events and forces that shape its members' lives and, b) theatre and workshops as a means to share this experience with other groups. It also defined itself as a group which confronts the public with issues about women which have been hidden or considered irrelevant. The process involves addressing the problems of the people in the collective as they define them; it plugs these problems back into the society for discussion, for deeper analysis and for solution. This process is one of conscientization. The actresses earn a small income for their theatre and drama work and they administer the co-operative and its organization. Performances are used for mixed audiences (different classes, sexes, interests), workshops for smaller, homogeneous groups.

In the workshops we find Boal's technique of "forum theatre" to be particularly useful because it allows the group we are working with to experience the problem being dealt with in an immediate way (Boal, 1978). We present an image of the problem and then discuss it with the group. We then take apart the original image, in a step-by-step way. The audience discusses and enacts their solutions, thus rehearsing their new ideas. This allows the audience to take an active role in an old problem, to improvise, check the accuracy of the situation and to re-improvise. The sense of what the situation really feels like as well as the opportunity to explore his or her capabilities deepens the drama. At the end of a workshop like this each person has a clearer sense of what he or she can actually do to understand or change the situation.

These workshops are particularly effective with small target groups which the problems can receive more thorough treatment. Shared assumptions and experience create a sense of community and concentration and the heated up area of experience often becomes clearer. This atmosphere can be mined very efficiently in discussion. In a workshop in the women's prison we began after a physical warm-up session to listen to a story - told to the workshop by a member of Sistren, of her experience of being forced, by a man she was afraid of, to hide stolen goods. The degree of empathy that this created among the women in prison who had never had much opportunity to discuss their actual experiences in that way, was incredible. Each woman told her story of betrayal in a kind of spontaneous poetry born of the intensity of the situation. It was a testimony about oppression and the more women joined in, the louder was the protest. It was quite easy afterwards to discuss similarities and to search for the causes of the experiences - because already there was an awareness of the personal being structural. It was possible to move from the personal to the analysis. This kind of experience would have been impossible in a larger audience, with a wide cross-section of people. And the understanding gained is not forgotten. The physical acting out of the communal experience, or understanding of self, seems to be very important because of the privatised nature of existence being imposed by capitalism in the Third World. The empathetic response is only useful if it is based on what is true, on documentary life, on a shared class consciousness and gender consciousness. It is because Sistren draw upon the Afro-Jamaican tradition of testimony (which is a form but which is also true, that is, it is performed but it is not fiction) that the intellectual and the emotional impact are so strong. Workshops are never finished products. Performances to general audiences are.

Each step of the work described below attempts to broaden the basis on which the collective has contact with and expresses solidarity with the struggles of the community as a whole. What is being articulated on stage or in workshop is being struggled for, or against in reality. The workshops with the community and the rehearsal workshops offer an opportunity for bringing together, for living study (drama), scholars, artists and poor people. What is discovered is shared through performance, which is then discussed with the community so that even at this stage what is learned can be re-incorporated into the dramatic study (play).

METHOD OF WORK

Step 1: Physical Exercises

In the first stage the aim is to evoke themes from the group's experience. These themes are drawn from areas in which shared experience is strongest. The early exercises aim to teach the physical skills of acting because this is the medium the group has chosen to use. The group has to become comfortable with improvisation so that it releases energy rather than restricts it. No in-depth work can go on until this happens. The work in physical skill begins with and through the body of the woman herself - it is the instrument she works with - not something introduced from outside. Initially, all work is group work, chorus work. Gradually individual work begins.

These initial exercises teach the basic physical language of the theatre - character, objective, environment and obstacle. On another level the workshop also begins to gather childhood and "folk" games collected by the group. These kinds of games establish a relationship between the cultural tradition of the women - as black people - and the work to be undertaken. Many folk games have implicit metaphorical messages which can be developed into improvisation out of the actual structure of the scene; others make good physical games. One example of this is the game "bull in the pen" which can be expanded as follows: A group of players encircle a group of two actors. The players create a "pen" by encircling linking arms. The two players give each of the players in the outer circle the role of one aspect of the society which they feel oppresses them. The two players in the centre plot and strategize a means of getting out of the pen.

Out of these exercises certain themes will begin to emerge. The next step involves pulling out a specific theme or themes around which to continue the work. The group should pick the themes which they will use to develop their testimonies.

Step 2: Testimonies

These are an important part of Jamaican tradition and they are also part of the women's tradition of labrish[4]. Their form is well-known to most women from the labouring poor, because they have learned their structure in churches, at wakes and from listening to their mothers and grandmothers. This is one reason why testimonies are a natural step to the results of the physical exercises and can be used complementarily. Testimonies drawn from personal experience are evoked from the themes selected from the first step. Testimonies can be evoked from pictures, songs, a word, newspapers or simple actions. They need not always be personal accounts, but can be accounts of observed situations. Testimonies should trigger responses from others in the groups. All testimonies are grouped by themes, by the group itself in discussion.

In an interview, the women in Sistren say,

> one time one a them say, what happen behind closed doors not supposed to come out to the public...I used to think that you shouldn't make others hear your problems, like them will take it curse you or

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[4] Labrish is "to blab, let out secrets", p. 269, Cassidy and LePage, Dictionary of Jamaican English

> something. But I find that it is not so at all. By talking my problems I find that others have the same and even worse ones... We shouldn't shame to talk them because by talking, we help out not ourselves alone, but also other women.

Again elsewhere, Vivette Lewis says, "You have to have faith to live in the ghetto....you have to say to yourself, whatsoever problem come I suppose to know how to solve it". The first stage is the description of the problem, after follows the analysis.

A testimony can, as in the earlier example, serve as a basis for a workshop. Or, if the team is aiming at a play-study, they can then select the testimonies which they want to explore in greater depth. The testimonies are grouped around a basic outline for a working scenario. At this stage the scenario will be very rough and incomplete. The details will become clearer, much later. In fact the final version of the scenario will probably appear to have very little relationship to the first.

In working with the testimonies it is the director's task to help the group to find connections between the testimonies they are selecting. It is also her job to help the actors to reformulate as problems the questions raised by the testimonies that will determine and deepen the course of the work.

In our first year of working with testimonies, the themes which were named focussed mainly on childhood and adolescence and the question of domestic work emerged very clearly as a problem. Here is an abreviated example of an early testimony:

> I didn't get enough schooling. The reason for this: living in the country and my mother didn't have any help. She had eight of

> us and I was the biggest girl. She had to leave us and go out to get food. She have to work out during the day, so that she can find enough food for us. So you find that I have to stay at home most of the time and do the washing, the cooking and keep the smaller ones occupied at home. That is the reason I didn't get enough schooling.
>
> \- Beverly Elliot

In reformulating this testimony as a problem, the aim is to find relationships between various areas of the problem - or between one testimony like this and another. As this happens the problem, which has now acquired a name, and the situation emerge as not just shared but as social and political. In looking at the problems in the testimony the group formulates questions about the situation and its content and these questions lead to the next stage - that of research. For example: some of the questions from the above testimony are, a) Why is it women's work? b) Why did the mother have no help? In this case the answer to this question was that the father had gone to Kingston to get wage work...Which leads to another question: c) Why is wage work normally offered to men? d) How has the movement of people from the towns to the city affected women?

RESEARCH

These questions cannot be answered from within the experience of the women only, which is where the material worked with had so far come from. The group then, has to go outside to find the answers to its questions. This can be done in several ways. If we continue with the example of Bev's testimony and we try to answer the question of why wage work is normally offered to men in the form of a scene, we will very quickly see the depths of our own ignorance. At this stage we begin to read. Inevitably we will find that there is nothing to read on the question in the library - or the newspaper. So we have to call on the help of a professional researcher to work with us. The material she contributes must be in a form which the group can dramatise. The researcher is not coming in to tell the group what to do, she is coming in to offer her skills and to help answer certain questions. In another method of work the actresses from the community work with other women in their neighbourhood to collect experiences and additional material on the theme.

Having researched the problem, we can then rewrite the scenario to include discoveries from the research and to keep a sense of the questioning process which helped us to arrive at our final product. At this stage we improvise the whole scenario again.

RECORDING THE MATERIAL

All the actresses work on recording their scenes. For Jamaican women, it is often extremely liberating to begin to write and read in the language of creole which one speaks. It is also very interesting to read one's own experiences explained and illuminated. Women, used to an oral tradition, record very accurately what they say, because the memory is often much more agile. Each person contributing to recording a scene or workshop has to delegate final responsibility to one person to put the whole thing together.

The recording and passing on of materials is an important step in the breaking down of group elitism and the sense of specialness that individual groups doing "special" work engender. It is a way of making contact with other organizations of women among the labouring poor. The recorded material can be re-used and passed on. A great deal of unrecorded improvisational work has gone on in Jamaica, and one of the sad results of this is that we have no access to material which has been done before. This obviously slows down progress. In our own experience we have also lost a great deal of our work, because of inefficiency or lack of time. In a situation where women have been "hidden" for centuries in documents and records and planning, the recording of the play-studies and workshops become even more imperative.

PERFORMANCE

Plays are often more vital for the actors than for the audience. That is, the process of creating a play-study often is more complete for those who are doing it than for those who watch the end-product. That is why the open structure of a workshop is often more exciting and useful for both actors and participants. Nevertheless, plays receive more public attention and attract a diverse audience - which can lead to a very stimulating exchange. One of the most important things about performances is that they can be an act of solidarity with a particular issue or struggle. Sistren's Bandoolu Version opened in the community of central Kingston with a play performed in solidarity with the struggle of women to get maternity leave legislation passed in Jamaica.

Recently I have been experimenting with ways of making performances or play-studies into discussion-plays. That is, I have been aiming to find a structure of play which can break down into discussion and then build up into narrative or scene structure again. One of the difficulties with performances and discussion is that very often discussion appears stilted and embarassing after the deliberate exclusion of the audience from participation in the dialogue of the play. I have been aiming for a form which melts into discussion with the audience without losing the impact that a consciously planned dialogue as well as scenario can have.

CONCLUSIONS

The process of working in drama for women involves the creating of a community in which some of the hidden or taboo subjects about women can be exposed and the audience confronted with them. As such, drama is not a reflection of life but a de-mystification of it, by the full exploration of these realities. After three years of work Sistren provides a dramatic forum for the problems of women from the labouring poor and in so doing helps to pressure for changes for women. By confronting what has been considered indecent, irrelevant or accepted, we have begun to make a recorded refusal of ways in which our lives have been thwarted and restricted. We have begun to refuse the forces behind those ways.

Methods and techniques are not very important. It is where they take you that matters. What becomes of the work is determined by the content and the consciousness one brings to the theme. Work of this kind can perpetuate oppressive structures as well as it can help to change them. The form is only important in so far as it structures and analyses the content and in so far as it leads to new understandings, new knowledge and new collective action.

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POPULAR DRAMA AND POPULAR ANALYSIS IN AFRICA

by

Brian Crow and Michael Etherton

BACKGROUND

Over the past decade a variety of experiments in popular theatre as a tool for social development have sprung up in various parts of Africa - Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Zambia. These experiments have differed in objective and methodology but they have all started with the notion of "taking theatre to the people instead of expecting people to come to the theatre" (Kasoma, 1974, p.1). Many adopted Brecht's view of "popular theatre". Brecht maintained that the people, to which this use of "popular" refers, are no longer to be defined as 'quaint' or folksy', nor as a group or class whose time-honoured customs and traditions have reinforced their inferior status. "Our conception of 'popular'", he suggests, "refers to the people who are not only fully involved in the process of development but are eventually taking it over, forcing it, deciding it." (Brecht, p.108). Brecht then manages to link both tradition and revolution in the concept of 'popular', which he defines as, "...taking over [the people's] own forms of expression and enriching them....representing the most progressive section of the people in such a way that it can take over the leadership....linking with tradition and carrying it further....". (Brecht, p.108). Brecht does not turn away from the people, but reiterates that the people are to take over the culture. The initiative in art, and in the culture, will be usurped from the bourgeoisie by the masses.

These experiments have taken a number of stages in the process of 'bringing theatre to the people'. These stages are not necessarily chronological, and two or more may co-exist even in one country. But we do see it as a process. Common to all the stages in the process is the notion that intellectuals, students and playwrights are to be involved with the masses in developing theatre.[1]

First, there is a stage of development in which established plays, and plays developed according to the criteria of the 'well-made play', are toured to various communities, and the publicity for them is directed towards getting the public at large to attend. These plays may not always be appropriate for the audiences for whose benefit they are staged; but enjoyment of them by those audiences is necessary for the plays to be retained in the repertoire for the tour. The Makerere University Travelling Theatre of the mid-1960's, which is an example of this stage, is also the beginning, chronologically, of 'popular' theatre in East Africa.

Another stage in the process is when bureaucratically-inspired plays for rural and urban slum communities are performed, for example, about the need for family planning or literacy, or about building pit latrines. UNESCO and IPPF (International Planned Parenthood Federation) have been funding agencies for this sort of 'popular' theatre in India, South-East Asia and in Nigeria (Okediji and Ogionwo, 1973). Governments, too whatever their political hue, are usually anxious to fund ever more effective ways of implementing their social policies.

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[1] We use the term intellectuals in this paper in the sense in which it is used in much of the Third World, i.e. to signify educated persons actively working for social change.

Another stage in the process of 'popular' theatre points in a completely different direction. In this stage the emphasis is on theatre and the people themselves making theatre, rather than on social change or state propaganda. Intellectuals or professional drama-practitioners encourage communities to develop their own theatre clubs. To achieve this, workshops are run in target communities in which community members (mainly middle-class government workers) create plays within a week or so, which are then widely performed in different places within the community. It is argued that if people in rural and provincial communities are given confidence to make a play in a week, then they will go on to form their own drama groups to provide entertainment in the community. Beyond this there are no specific political objectives. The work of the Chikwakwa ("grass-roots") travelling theatre in Zambia reflects this stage very clearly though it eventually moved to the other stage we have noted of touring ready-made productions to rural audiences (Etherton, 1973).

A development from this stage which can be separately identified is one which involves villagers in making plays about their own problems. In this stage the emphasis is on the people's participation in the process of solving local community problems. This participation is actually on two levels. The first concerns the acting. Like the previous stage, it uses the various development workers (community development staff, agricultural extension workers, health educators) as the actors, performers and animateurs. But unlike the previous stage which concentrated on entertainment alone, now the development workers must research the specific problems of the target communities in which the plays will be performed before they begin devising the plays. Thus, there is contact with the potential audiences in the research before there is contact with them, usually a week later, as actual audiences. The second level involves the participation of these spectators in the completion of the plays, which are deliberately left unfinished. The responses of the audiences are planned for by making plays about particularly pressing problems which the research has identified. The audiences are then asked to add to them, or even to complete them, either through lengthy discussions between the theatre activists and members of the audience in [illegible] small groups, or by getting members of the audience to act out solutions, or both. The Botswana Popular Theatre Campaigns, as they are called, of which the first was Laedza Batanani ("The sun is already up. Let us come together and work"), are examples of this stage of the process. Laedza Batanani was a 'rough' theatre. It deliberately turned its back on theatre skills which, if adopted by the actors, might inhibit villagers from acting out their problems. At the same time it made considerable use of popular songs and story-telling traditions of the area in order to communicate dilemmas. (Kidd and Byram, 1978).

We need to consider at this point the influence of two Latin Americans on the development of popular theatre. One is Paulo Freire whose concept of conscientization - the process of enabling people to identify their problems as a consequence of a particular social order - has been a major source of ideas for the Botswana popular theatre programme, as well as for literacy and adult education in other parts of Africa. The other is Augusto Boal who has greatly influenced the development of a radical popular theatre in Latin America, and whose influence in Africa is likely to be increasingly felt through his recent book, Theatre of the Oppressed. Boal carries the meaning of 'popular theatre' in the direction of making the people not just the audiences but also the actors and creators of the dramas. He sees theatre as a language, "capable of being utilized by any person, with or without artistic talent" (Boal, 1979, p. 121). Talking about his participation in the Peruvian literacy campaign he says:

> "We tried to show in practice how theatre can be placed at the service of the oppressed, so that they can express themselves and so that, by using the new language, they can also discover new concepts." (Boal, 1979, p. 121)

And he adds:

> "I believe that all the truly revolutionary theatrical groups should transfer to the people the means of production in the theatre so that the people themselves may utilise them. The theatre is a weapon, and it is the people who should wield it." (Boal, 1979, p. 122)

It can be seen, therefore, that 'popular theatre' indicates a wide and contradictory range of theatre activities, and very different types of drama. Our use of the term will signify a theatre through which intellectuals try to communicate with the people most disadvantaged in their society, either by presenting plays to them in which the problems of society are articulated from the point of view of the people, or by getting them to present plays to themselves which increasingly help them to analyze their society.

LIMITATIONS OF EXISTING 'POPULAR' THEATRE

There are weaknesses manifest in all these stages of popular theatre which we ought to note before we pass on to a consideration of its strengths and potential.

The central problem in staging established and conventionally 'well-made' plays to popular audiences in Africa is that even when the play is appropriate and understood, it is self-contained and rendered complete *before* ever being performed before these audiences and without reference to them. The spectators, by virtue of the form of the drama and not because of the content, are made to be passive - rowdy and appreciative, perhaps, but nevertheless consumers of a finished product.

On the other hand, there are problems about abandoning the 'well-made' play as part of an effort to demystify the art of acting and to get those who are interested confident about becoming involved in performing plays through improvisation. Improvisation is itself an art, needing both natural talent and the acquisition of certain skills in order to do it effectively. In fact, in abandoning an established form, one is forced to substitute a new form. Form-lessness *per se* takes us only to the threshhold of artistic expression but not across it. It has been our experience over and over again that those people in rural African communities with no previous experience of contemporary theatre or drama and little formal artistic education, who become interested in doing the drama themselves, want more than anything else the *skills* of drama. These skills ought not to be compared with the conventional skills of performance (e.g. singing, hand-clapping, drumming, chanting). What is especially wanted is access to the development of a new and appropriate dramatic form. This involves, for example, structuring narrative and dialogue, and developing action and comedy. The 'week-in-which-to-make-plays' sort of workshop usually achieves success only because of the skills, intuitions and experience of those professionals running the workshops. They can, and do, cut corners even without knowing it; and in very subtle ways they press upon the theatrically inexperienced group the necessary and appropriate solutions, in order to get the plays ready on time. If the main objectives of these workshops is to set up locally run drama groups when the professionals have returned to base, then the process is fraudulent: people in the community are left with boundless enthusiasm, perhaps, but hopelessly inadequate skills to create drama.

State-run public enlightenment and propagandist popular theatre has serious and obvious disadvantages. Problems of social development are often naively assessed; and within the context of political pragmatism short-term solutions only are advocated. These actually solve nothing and usually create further and more intractable problems. Global funding agencies, like UNESCO, also tend to see the problems in general without taking into account their particularity; and they also act as agents of governments rather than of the people whose sufferings their funding is designed to alleviate. There is a more subtle disadvantage which is revealed by the Popular Theatre Campaigns in Botswana which receive strong government support. Since the emphasis is on self-reliance and on the villagers coming together to solve their problems themselves, the dramas tend to concentrate on those problems which can be solved locally, and to leave aside more serious national problems, such as the ominous presence of apartheid South Africa along its southern borders or the economic reasons for labour migration. It is problematical if such a popular theatre movement can awaken consciousness concerning these wider problems. Indeed, this sort of 'conscientization' of the masses is seen even by socialist governments as a rival to its own programmes and perspectives. It might not be allowed to function beyond its self-imposed local limitations; and even then the dramatic skills and techniques may as well be used for reactionary and ultimately repressive policies.

"THE LIFE OF THE DRAMA"

What, then, would a radically popular theatre be like? And how would such a theatre be achieved? We can approach these questions by posing another question: what is the appeal of drama in all these attempts to raise the consciousness of ordinary, uneducated people?

The question is difficult because to answer it we would have to try to lay bare the universal appeal of drama as a human activity and mode of communication; we would have to anatomize, in a distinguished American critic's phrase, "the life of the drama" (Bentley, 1965). There is at least one certainty, which is that at its best drama does succeed in having, in some sense, a 'life' of its own. Its 'best' may be in the form of a skillfully contrived piece of escapism which permits an audience to take collective imaginative refuge in a fictive realm of existence more pleasurable than its everyday one. Or, at a more serious artistic level, the audience -

and perhaps the performers as well - are 'taken out of themselves' and enabled to engage imaginatively in a dramatic fiction which is felt to have some serious connection with, and relevance to, their own everyday reality. In either case, drama has the power to create enactments which represent playful fabrications of human reality.

Herein lies drama's potency as a means of communication for, say, a group of adult educators and community development officers working with peasants whose experience is almost entirely restricted to their immediate environs. Let us say that the adult educators are part of a large-scale official campaign to establish mass literacy, and their use of drama thus belongs to the 'public enlightenment' stage of popular theatre. They see their first task as making clear to the peasants the social benefits that may accompany literacy. But how is this to be done when the explanation of the benefits must inevitably allude to social phenomena outside the peasants' own experience? Drama can imaginatively project a possible future based on the realities of the community's current way of life, which forcefully depicts the advantages of literacy. One does not have to be literate or educated to be imaginative; and the peasants' collective imagination can be focused on the possibility of a better life based on literacy skills, which in turn - theoretically, at least - infuses them with the desire to be literate.

The drama clearly has a special 'life' of its own here, in the sense that not only is a more desirable reality than the peasants' current one being enacted before their eyes, but the strategies for achieving it seem genuinely possible, so that for a while they can actually see a way forward. In this case, drama is being consciously used as a kind of wish-fulfilment connected quite concretely with reality. The play which provides the images of the fulfilled wish may have been put together by the adult educators on the basis of discussion with these and other peasants and as a result of observation of their actual lives. It may even have been worked up through improvisation based on an exchange of ideas and suggestions between the performers and their advisers. The performers may make slight variations in the dialogue and in small details of their characterization, but essentially the play has probably achieved a completed form.

But now let us imagine that something untoward occurs in an apparently routine performance of this public enlightenment play. It is coming to a close: the newly-literate son of a peasant farmer receives news that, being literate, he can now enter a government trade-school in the nearby town. His good fortune is to be contrasted with the misery of this brother, who has not made the effort to become literate and is accordingly doomed to follow in his father's poverty-stricken, village-centred footsteps. The actor, a full-time community development officer, has for some weeks past been feeling uneasy about the agreed conclusion of the play but he has not voiced his disquiet. He is himself from a small village which has been virtually destroyed as a community by the movement of its younger inhabitants to the towns: much as he wishes to see the growth of literacy in his country he knows, as his mainly-urban colleagues do not, that literacy itself brings problems to a community like his own and the one he is now visiting. He opens the letter from the trade-school and reads it; but he cannot, in all sincerity, bring himself to look happy. The actor playing his brother asks him what the letter says; he is now supposed to reply jubilantly that he can go to the town. But the words refuse to come. The actor playing his brother looks worried and repeats his question, prompting his colleague to make the correct response. He hears himself say: "The letter is from the trade-school. It says I can now go there. But brother ....I do not want to go." The brother looks confused, as well he might, since his colleague has said the opposite of what he is expected to say. There is a long pause and then the brother says the only thing he can say in the circumstances: "Why are you so sad when you've received such good news?" Slowly, stumblingly, the young community development officer begins to explain: what will happen to the family while he is away? What if, after his training, he wants to - indeed must - stay in the town to find a job? What good is this literacy if it is going to take so many of the young men away, perhaps for ever?

In a sense the play has gone off the rails, with no one now knowing where it will end. Everything has been thrown into confusion, the actors are now obliged to think on their feet. We must look more closely at what precisely has happened.

The group of adult educators and community development officers is functioning quite consciously as a 'catalyst' in relation to the local communities: they are trying to inspire them into thinking about and wishing for literacy[2]. As catalysts they have a 'higher' level of social consciousness than the villagers, based on their education and wider social experience. They are now engaged in 'raising' the consciousness of the peasants, using drama as their primary tool. But the young community development officer, partly through his personal experience, has understood that the consciousness of the catalysts is not great enough, for it does not include an awareness of the possible harmful effects of the spread of literacy for a peasant community. In this respect, he even suspects that the peasants know more than the catalysts, for they are forced through their own immediate life-experience to forsee some of the dangers: although the peasants would not wish to be unfriendly, he suspects that some of the elders will secretly work against the spread of literacy because they see it, justifiably, as threatening their community.

The drama itself has crystallized this awareness of a contradiction for him. He cannot go along with the 'logic' of the play because, as a performer in it, it has focused his own doubts about the reality it seeks to portray. He cannot remain 'within' the flow of the play because he has begun, with the help of the drama itself, to see 'above' its flow. The scene in which he receives the good news of his admittance to the trade-school has become, for him at least, a bitter irony. For this young man, the drama has come to have a 'life' of its own in a new and special sense:

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[2] For convenience we will use the terms 'catalyst' and 'catalyst group' to signify those outsiders with specialist skills who work as organised groups in communities. The skills are both in theatre and community development.

the play not only presents a lively image of a wish fulfilled; it also simultaneously makes problematic that possible future reality, and it does so through its own internal logic. The drama, through its make-believe, has opened up for reflection and debate issues of crucial significance in the here and now. In one sense, then, it has gone off the rails; but in another it has only now really got on them.

A special kind of suspense, of excitement, now infuses the play. It is the same excitement that attends an improvisation which has 'taken off' - that of a group of people groping towards a better understanding of social reality by 'living it through' in play. It involves a kind of critical submission to the created and creating logic of the 'playing': what will happen next is not something arbitrary - at least not if the players keep their courage and sensitivity - but something which will emerge naturally from the flow of fictive but authentic experience which constitutes the drama up to that particular point. Of course the play might come to a halt; the actors might not be able to go on acting, but they can now engage in a discussion with their audience and amongst themselves. Even the breakdown represents a gain, for it has produced something more 'true' than what was there before.

This kind of 'breakthrough' need not be - indeed rarely is - the result of a performer's doubts about the finished play. It may be produced in a less 'dramatic' way: for example, by a number of performers becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the play and agreeing to go back to the 'improvisation-rehearsal' stage so that a problem or contradiction can be fully worked into the drama. Or the play may be reworked because of the criticisms of the bolder and more articulate members of the audience. In either case, the catalyst group would still be aiming for a 'finished' play, though now one which more adequately dramatizes social contradictions. We have gone beyond the scope of public enlightenment theatre. A more adventurous catalyst group with the theatrical skills to do so may even decide to incorporate this element of 'open', improvisatory playing into its public performances. Augusto Boal, for example, in his experiments with the People's Theatre in Peru, developed a "rehearsal-theatre" designed to transform the spectators into actors by having them 'complete' plays deliberately left unfinished by the performers (Boal, 1979, pp. 120-155).

POPULAR THEATRE: PROBLEMS OF IDEOLOGY AND FORM

A truly popular theatre would thus presumably be one in which the people themselves, in spite of the handicaps imposed by lack of formal education, could initiate and develop theatrical explorations of their predicaments and by doing so engage in a continuous process of social self-education. The desire of catalyst groups to involve the spectators increasingly in an active collaboration in the making and performance of the play would thus have reached its logical conclusion: the catalyst group itself would no longer be necessary since the spectators have themselves become the actors. This represents an ideal still to be worked for. The crucial question now is: what is the most effective way of working towards this ideal?

To be effective, catalyst groups must be able to perform two essential functions: they must be able to raise the consciousness of their target audiences by developing increasingly 'open', collaborative forms of dramatic presentation which actively engage the spectators; and they must, at the same time, be able to impart skills and an understanding of the relation between drama and social problem-exploration to some at least of the spectators so that they can initiate and execute this kind of drama in their own community. Let us consider some of the problems involved.

The first and fundamental problem has to do with the catalyst group's own collective level of social consciousness. To fulfil effectively the two functions mentioned above the group must itself have a sufficiently high level of consciousness, both in terms of social and political issues generally and, more specifically, in relation to the social nature of their theatrical project. By "a sufficiently high level of consciousness" what we mean is the capacity of the members of the group to keep a constant, critical vigilance over their own ideological proclivities, and to be prepared to test these, through discussion but also through drama, against known and experienced realities. Again, there is a crucial nexus here between ideology and form. The individual members of the group cannot help but have some personal ideology, however tenuous or incomplete this may be. Assuming that the members of the catalyst group are of a similar social status and educational background, which is likely to be the case, these personal ideologies are almost certain to coincide in some basic respects. The group is likely to have a common ideology in the sense that the members of all social classes and groups, inasmuch as they share certain common material conditions and interests, exhibit common prejudices, beliefs and expectations. However sincerely concerned the members of the group may be with raising the consciousness of less advantaged people, there is an inevitable temptation for them to believe, quite sincerely, that raising the people's consciousness is the same as getting the people to see the correctness of their own common ideology. So deeply but unconsciously may the beliefs and prejudices of this ideology be buried that the members of the group do not even consciously know of them or articulate them.

Clearly, the catalyst group's unconscious or uncritical commitment to an ideology militates against the development of open-ended, collaborative forms of community drama. (This would still be the case even if the ideology were 'correct'.) It hinders the group in being receptive to the views expressed by members of the target audience; and while their own shared beliefs and prejudices remain unconscious or uncritically accepted they are unlikely to be able to articulate dramatically the full extent and implications of a social contradiction. In our experience, this leads to two, paradoxically opposing tendencies: either for the group to 'say' less in their plays than they are capable of; or for them to 'say' more than they actually believe, as individuals and as a group. In the first case, their unexamined ideological proclivities have functioned as an unconscious inhibition to the dramatization of a problem; or, if their shared ideology has come to light during the play-making, their 'statement' has been consciously tailored to fit in with it. In the second case, the group 'says' more than it actually believes only by virtue of a generally acceptable hypocrisy, often associated with their paying lip-service to a rhetoric to which they do not, at heart, subscribe.

There is of course no simple, prescriptive solution to this problem of how the catalyst group's own social awareness can be brought to and kept at an adequate level. It is the old problem of who is to educate the educators. But it at least seems certain that a crucial part of the group's 'education' must be through its active and sustained participation in the lives of its target audiences. Antonio Gramsci, who was much preoccupied with the social and political function of the modern 'intellectual', wrote:

> The mode of being of the new intellectual can no longer consist in eloquence, which is an exterior and momentary mover of feelings and passions, but in active participation in practical life, as constructor, organizer, "permanent persuader" and not just a simple orator... (Gramsci, 1971, p.10)

Gramsci could have been writing specifically of the problem facing catalyst theatre groups in the Third World. Such groups must become what we might call 'ideologists in action', in the sense that they become 'scientific' observers of how material conditions and interests tend to give rise to particular sets of ideas and beliefs and forms of behaviour; and as "constructors" and "persuaders" they must be able to embody in dramatic form ideological conflicts and the material circumstances from which they have arisen, and by doing so be able to help their audiences in unmasking ideology in the sense of 'false consciousness'. To do this, as Gramsci notes, involves their "active participation in practical life", in this case the practical lives of their target audiences.

The second problem which confronts the catalyst group in its effective raising of the consciousness of its target audiences has to do with the very practical problem of devising, through discussion and improvisation, the basic 'scenario' of the play.[3] This is a problem that cannot be divorced from the first problem of the group's general level of social consciousness. Let us accept, however, for the sake of argument, that a group which has a very clear, articulated idea of what its play needs to 'say' about a particular social issue is in the process of putting that play together. It is then faced with the quite technical problem of devising a scenario upon which the dramatic presentation can be based. If the group were composed of professionally-trained actors and writers the problems could presumably be resolved through their professional expertise. But what if, as the case might very well be, the group has little or no such expertise - if, for example, it is composed largely or exclusively of adult educators and community development officers who have discovered the potency of drama as a mode of social communication? How are the educators to be educated at this technical, theatrical level?

One point requires particular emphasis; it is not enough for community development workers to come to drama-practitioners to learn certain 'objective' skills; for unless the people professionally engaged in drama have a thorough understanding of the theoretical and practical problems involved in community theatre they are likely to teach skills associated with the creation of 'well-made plays' rather than those required for the development of the formally 'open', collaborative drama which most effectively develops the social awareness of uneducated, mass audiences. The drama-practitioners, in other words, cannot be insulated from the social, ideological and hence formal problems specific to this kind of project.

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[3] By 'scenario' we mean the working outline of the play which will be improvised. The scenario is produced through a process of analysing social problems and formulating them in terms of plot, character-relationships and overall dramatic structure. A discussion of the process of scenario-making in relation to a popular theatre project amongst Hausa peasant farmers can be found in Bappa, 1980.

The full significance of this point emerges when we consider the problem of how catalyst groups can most effectively fulfil their second essential function, which is to impart skills to members of their target audience, including some understanding of how drama can be used to explore relevant problems. Gramsci, we have noted, wrote of the 'new' intellectual's "active participation in practical life". What does this mean, in reality, for professional drama-practitioners and others involved in this kind of popular theatre? It cannot, surely, mean only that catalyst groups spend much of their time on the road, visiting and performing for peasant or urban communities. To be active participants in practical life can only mean, in this context, that the members of the catalyst group actually live with their target communities over a considerable period of time.[4] And not only live with them, as relatively detached if sympathetic observers of their daily lives and problems, but as far as possible to become active participants in their economic and social life, and thus to experience at least some of their problems at first-hand.

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[4] The desirable period of time varies with the particular context, and need not be continuous. For example, with peasant communities, the work is likely to be in relation to the seasonal labour pattern.

Some of the difficulties of this are immediately evident. Apart from the problem of how a group of people who are essentially 'outsiders' can actually insert themselves into the economic and social structure of a community which is likely to be tightly knit, there is the question of the auspices under which the catalyst group works. These are likely, for many groups, to be associated with governmental or 'parastatal' organizations, such as the university or a social services department, where the staff are involved in formal education. But perhaps even more seriously there is the likelihood of ideological opposition to such ventures amongst bureaucrats and others with decision-making powers. In those countries where ideological commitment to improving rural conditions extends little further than rhetorical display the idea of a catalyst group living and working at length with a community is likely to arouse consternation and the suggestion that the rhetoric will suffice. In other countries, where class-conflict between the peasantry and proletariat on the one hand and the middle-class bureaucracy on the other is strong and overt the catalyst group may well find itself on the front line of class warfare, with all the dangers that that suggests.

That a prolonged participation in the lives of the target communities is essential for the effective functioning of the catalyst group can be demonstrated by specific reference to the crucial process of play-making. It is with a closer analysis of this process that we must conclude our discussion.

In our hypothetical example of the young community development officer engaged in the literacy play we saw that the 'life' of the drama helped to crystallize a social contradiction: that the spread of literacy exacerbates the tendency for the young men to leave the land. A social 'good' - the spread of literacy - is now seen by him as ironically encouraging a social 'evil' - the movement away from the land. Let us say that this young man now voices his awareness of this irony at a public discussion after the play. To complicate matters further, some of the audience declare that, no matter what the government or anyone else says, they will take the first opportunity of going to the town because "there is a better life there". It is agreed that a new play should be devised which will dramatically explore the contradiction further. A new narrative must be shaped, through discussion and experiment, in accordance with this perception of a contradiction. A new character is introduced - or an old one modified - so that the 'voice' of those who at all costs wish to leave the land is heard in the play. The young community development officer now plays a character who is divided between his desire to go to the town and learn a trade and his awareness that though the misery of peasant life in a sense justifies individuals' desire to leave the land such a drift has terrible social consequences. How will the nation feed itself, he asks, if the movement to the towns continues?

In the course of making the new play other contradictions are observed to follow from this basic contradiction. For example, someone points out that food is becoming increasingly more expensive in the towns. Why is this?

Because, someone suggests, there is less food being grown and transported to the towns: scarcity makes things dearer. The young men wish to go to the towns but by doing so life in the towns, for them and others, is becoming more and more difficult. This idea is now built into the play by having a scene showing a peasant farmer who has moved to the town experiencing financial problems. He doubts whether he can continue living there much longer, but he now also faces the problem that he has sold his land so that he has no farm to go back to. How can this problem, which is also the problem of many others, be resolved? Can it be resolved at all?

What has happened is that the former play has crystallized social problems and forced a new play to be made which concerns itself with these new insights. And in the course of making this new play other contradictions and perspectives are being opened up, not in an abstract way - e.g. the problem of 'inflation' - but in concrete terms based on the life-experiences and imaginative resources of the audience. Something has also happened, the participants discover, to the form of the drama. The awareness of contradictions creates a series of accumulating ironies which are now determining the structure of the narrative and characterization. The play now has about it a kind of ironic 'openness', not of the sort where the play stops and a discussion ensues where the audience is asked what should happen next, but in which the narrative structure itself functions as an ironic discloser of contradictions and possibilities. The play may, in its 'final' form, appear to be 'finished', but it is not a 'finished' play in the sense that the first literacy play was.

When, as in our hypothetical example, a play leads on to another play which tries to incorporate social contradictions made manifest by, and perhaps in, the previous play, drama becomes not a single, 'finished' theatrical occasion but a continuing social process. For there is every reason to expect that the second play, through the contradictions that it will reveal or begin to explore, will lead on to others. What is now occurring is a continuous process of consciousness-raising, not only for the members of the target audience, but also for the members of the catalyst group themselves. The visible gives access to the concealed: connections which normally remain hidden, even in the catalyst group's theoretical analysis, are being brought into the light through the drama. The process is dialectical, in the sense that the drama refers back to the analysis but also encourages - indeed forces - the development of the analysis through the physicalizations in character and situation of the social experiences. This dialectic is embodied in the creative collaboration of the talented actors and perceptive social analysts. Clearly, for a process like this to be possible, and for it to be enacted dramatically, requires a lengthy participation by the catalyst group in the life of a particular community. And it is only over a period of time that focal members of the target audience can be fully introduced to this idea of community play-making and be imbued with enough acting skills and performance procedures to initiate it on their own when the catalyst group eventually does move on.

That people from the community itself should be encouraged to assume the function of catalysts is, to our way of thinking, a basic requirement for effective popular theatre. Without this development, popular theatre in the full sense can never be achieved. It is surely part of the whole social function of this type of theatre that it seeks to socialize the means of theatrical production so that it becomes generally available as a method of self-education for the community. By doing so, the ultimate aim must be to transform the spectators into actors, not just dramatic actors but social actors with the ideological resources to play an active part in shaping their own historical narrative. If the role of drama in achieving this ideal is regarded as marginal by some intellectuals, it can at least be pointed out that established authority itself does not take so complacent a view. The latent potency of truly popular drama has been vividly attested to by those authorities who have from time to time taken the trouble to ban it and to punish its initiators.[5]

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[5] For example, Ngugi wa Thiong'o was imprisoned for a year by the Kenyan authorities for his play Ngahika Ndenda, which he developed with the Kenyan adult educator Ngugi wa Mirii, at the people's theatre at Kamirithu. See Kerr, 1981.

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LATIN AMERICAN WORKING GROUP

We set out to do two things:

A) develop a conceptual framework

B) outline a methodology for the use of nonconventional media for community work controlled by the people.

A. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

We characterize the countries of the Latin American region as capitalist, underdeveloped, and dependent. Most of them are authoritarian, and have a very rigid social class structure. In this context the existence of a fairly strong national bourgeoisie associated with multinational interests manifests itself by the ownership of the means of production, under control of the educational and cultural apparatus.

As a consequence, the atomization of the population makes it very difficult to establish a strong political and union organization. We are excluding from this characterization countries such as Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada which went through a very different political process.

The countries of the region are mainly rural in origin. Large segments of the population migrate to the urban areas. This development contributes to the expansion of the slums in the urban peripheries.

The unequal distribution of the resources, owned by a small percentage of the population, contributes to the impoverishment of the great majority.

In the region the Catholic church is one of the most powerful social institutions, traditionally allied to the most conservative and repressive sectors of the society. However, in some countries a strong progressive minority within the church became allies of the oppressed classes. This progressive part of the church carries on their work by organizing the rural and urban communities.

The political parties have not been able to incorporate an answer through the platforms, the orientations, and reindications of the large popular sectors.

The unions, persecuted and repressed by the numerous military governments that prevail in the region, had and still have tremendous difficulties in organizing and developing themselves. This is definitely more difficult in the rural areas where oppression is stronger. Whenever the unions get developed and organized, they tend to become bureaucratic in their organization, drifting away from the people they represent.

Within the cultural forces that operate within the region the international agencies responsible for financial and technical assistance and at the service of the local governments are not supporting alternative lines of action that are appropriate to the needs of the people.

The alliances among the multinational interests and the dominant national sectors reveal several strategies that work as palliatives without affecting the structural, socioeconomic and cultural conditions of the population.

In this context, the "Alliances for Progress" and the "Green Revolution" in the past, and the "Rural Integrated Development" projects of today are vivid examples.

At the same time these alliances have tried to co-opt the popular currents that emerged as an alternative strategy. It deliberately tried to distort concepts such as "popular education," "popular culture," "conscientization," "participation," etc.

The present educational system in its formal and nonformal aspect clearly tends to reinforce the dominant ideology. It is an education alienated from reality, authoritarian and vertical, individualistic, classist, and anti-analytical. Through centralization, it tends to make cultural values uniform, clearly and intentionally violating the broad cultural and ethnic differences that can be observed within the countries of Latin America. The prevailing educational system is very limited in its ability to respond to the real needs of the population.

The clear predominance of the private sector in the educational system contributes to the consolidation of these characteristics.

The introduction of educational technology such as TV, strongly supported by the intellectual and industrial sectors of the First World, tend to strengthen the authoritarian, individualistic and centralized characteristics of the educational system.

However, it is necessary to emphasize the non-monolithical aspects of the educational system. Its natural contradictions and certain flexibilities allow the development of opportunities which oppose the impositions of the official apparatus. Non-government organizations are trying to extend to their clientele the benefits of different types of education, liberating in its theoretical and practical aspects. In a different manner this is also taking place within the official educational system through the interaction among teachers and students.

The mass media which are predominantly in the hands of the private sector ally themselves with the national dominant sectors and their multinational partners. Through their messages they reinforce the alienated, individualistic and centralized characteristics found in the educational sector.

In the educational sector as well as in the mass media there is no participation of the people in defining the contents of the curricula or programmes. On the one hand we cannot deny the persuasive power of the mass media which permanently acts upon its audience. But on the other hand, we have to stress the fact that the audience does not have a totally passive attitude despite the continuous ideological "bombing." There is an attitude of resistance at a latent level that might be detected and explored, and turned into straightforward expressions through the nonconventional means of communication within "popular educational" work.

There exists a large variety of traditional forms of communication that historically have enabled the communities to perpetuate their cultures and traditions. Traditionally these means of communication were an integral part of the life of the community; at present they are being used to serve other objectives, reified as folklore for the consumption of people outside the community and used to channel externally imposed messages which fail to address the real needs of the community.

In Latin America culture is dynamic rather than static. We distinguish between the "people's culture," with its positive and negative aspects and the "popular culture." The people's culture, a mixture of the values from the people and of those from the dominant class, has developed in its various forms. By people's culture we mean the culture that exists and manifests itself in a spontaneous and natural way through music, customs, values, etc. It is a culture dominated and absorbed by the ruling culture, and which has been able to impose, across time, values foreign to the popular interests and favourable to the ruling class. By popular culture we mean the culture that preserves, rescues, and incorporates elements whose content is eminently popular, that is to say the culture which strengthens ethnic and class consciousness.

Rediscovering these genuine popular values which we find (mixed together and diffused) in people's culture in a critical way, and returning these values systematically to the people, for the benefit of the people, is the fundamental task of popular education.

We have defined two basic areas of analysis: 1) the indigenous social structures and the need for its organizational development, and, 2) the concepts of peoples' culture and popular culture and the way nonconventional means of communication are utilized.

With respect to the need for the organization of the communities, we strongly advocate this basic organizational work in order to prepare the conditions for a process of fundamental structural change. This organization must lead to the development of economic systems within the community that answer the fundamental requirements of their population. The community organization should also be geared to the principal objective, which is to build conditions for generating and promoting an autonomous popular power. This must be done through the support of the established organizations and through the stimulation of new ones.

In that sense, popular education comes to be by and for the organizational purpose. This relationship must maintain a pluralistic character, because only in this way can a broader sector of the population be reached by the educational services.

An example of the organization of "popular education" is the Bolivian case. In systematizing the process and structures of Quechua culture, the culture is revitalized in such a way that it responds to the present characteristics of the society. For that reason an institution has emerged such as the Ayni Wasi (reciprocity-house).

As one of its functions, the Ayni Wasi

- manages a store for agricultural products and manufactures resulting from inter-community exchanges and, to a lesser degree, urban commodities;
- organizes and coordinates a productive system which includes handicraft, agricultural and industrial products;
- coordinates a social service system which includes health care, housing, and others;
- coordinates a social communication system, which expresses itself through theatre, songs, dance, interchange of information among communities and regions;
- organizes a team of popular educators, trained for the purpose.

Due to its symbolic and organizational role, the Ayni Wasi unifies the community, gives a dynamic impulse at the social, political, and cultural level, neutralizes antagonist forces, and acts as a catalyst for the spontaneous appearance of new Ayni Wasis and educational activities.

It is important to point out that each Ayni Wasi coordinates its activities with those of other institutions operating at a more centralized level. It also helps in the search for and selection of modern technology and other resources useful for the development of structures and resources for their own use.

Popular education as a social process, should reach beyond the schools themselves. The union between school, education, and the working world should be activated, as well as the integration of the schools within their respective communities.

Popular education is a process that must be seen within a wider context: it should involve the family, social groups, and the working world so that the school becomes a complement to development instead of merely an agency that transfers knowledge and yet retains the power of decision-making related to the community.

Popular education must have a class connotation and must aim at strengthening popular culture, by creating conditions for the development of the community. Thus, it should help the community and its groups to realize, understand, and systematize fully the economic, social, and cultural processes at the national, regional, and local levels and the possibility for opening up more collective actions which can generate socioeconomic and cultural improvements.

For this purpose, we can only see this development as an ongoing process involving the full participation of the community in decision-making as well as in controlling the process. Thus, community participation should form part of the design, the implementation, and the evaluation of popular educational projects.

B. METHODOLOGY FOR USING NON-CONVENTIONAL MEDIA

One of the ways in which they have already been used in several countries is their instrumentalisation by foreign agents. We observed how the form and content have been manipulated with minimal or token participation by the community. We reject this approach, because it violates what we have been saying, up till now about popular education: this 'instrumentalist' approach to nonconventional communication media does not differ very much from that of the conventional educational methods and media. It is imposed from above, and, thus, is authoritarian and centralized; and it does not respond to the real needs of the population. Examples all over the world support this statement: family planning, propagation of the false concept of nationalism, the use of music and dance for tourist consumption, etc.

Nonconventional media within "popular education" work should be done by means of a dialectical approach involving the active participation of the community. The method should develop from an integrated work together with the community. Through the diagnosis and systematisation of their reality the community should determine how the existing nonconventional communication media should fit in.

Popular educators, working closely within the community can help through methodological and technical means. The programme content should be drawn from the experiences of both the popular educator and the community.

With these points in mind the popular educator's function is to support and orient the group's actions towards:

- distinguishing between what is an objective (fulfillment of a need) and a task (means of accomplishing an objective);
- determining the operational objectives once the needs of the group are established;
- defining the tasks each group member must assume, and handing out supporting material so the entire organization understands its duties;
- informing the group of the resources available for attending to the educational/technical needs of the community, in order to take advantage of all current resources that operate within the area;
- informing the groups of the most efficient methods and techniques for collective action.

The support given by the popular educator enables the groups to gradually assume responsibility for the project and for their own organization. In all types of work selected for this purpose (e.g., study and research circles, group organization laboratories, participatory research, and others), the role of the popular educator is limited to coordinating discussions. The groups themselves analyze and elaborate on the particular projects.

In sum, the objective is to synthesize a common project that permanently involves the community groups and the popular educator. As the project focuses on a participatory approach to learning, both the popular educator and the members of the groups become actors in the process of popular education.

One example of this approach is the workshops on popular education methodology developed in Nicaragua based on the IMDEC (Mexico) experience.

The work consisted of the following:

1. Introduction Exercises and Games, Integration, and Organization

1.1 We try, from the very outset when the participants are introduced, to "break the ice," inspire confidence and group unity. In order to do this, we employ diverse games and dynamics.

1.2 Organization of committees for the development of the workshop.

1.3 Some primary "codes" for the identification of the group are established.

2. Source of Theoretical Content

Starting with the notion that the popular education methodology is best learned through doing it and living it, a "thematic axis" is chosen through which the methodology can be transmitted live. The most common thematic axis is the analysis of reality.

2.1 First, a general vision of the subject, based on a slide-tape show "The Story of Tigers and Cats" which presents in the form of a fable and using colour drawings, the history of humanity from a class perspective.

2.2 The accumulation logic of the capitalist system. The group plays "Star power", a game which reproduces the mechanisms of capitalist accumulation, and illustrates conduct based on profit-making, ambition, and power. Critical discussion of events in the game gives testimony to and permits comprehension of the concepts being worked out.

2.3 In-depth analysis of the historical and structural: by means of mime dramatization and dramatized reading of the story "The Market" (by Bellamy, a 19th century author).

2.4 Work in small groups, analyzing and classifying the content of the story into its economic, political, and ideological aspects.

3. Level of Abstraction, "The Social Tree"

3.1 The coordinator explains, drawing on group input, how all systems operate, showing the dominant economic structures as well as the political and ideological ones.

Towards this purpose, the example of a tree is used which symbolizes society: the roots = the economic function; the trunk = the political system; the foliage = the ideological apparatus.

3.2 Design of their own "social tree." During this stage, small groups analyze their own reality, using their own concrete data. These facts are presented and classified into a new "social tree".

4. Towards the Dynamics of Concrete Reality

4.1 A game called "the blind and the bound." The game reproduces the structure of social classes in conflict, each attempting to attain its own particular goals: the blind (the exploited) to become united; the bound (middle class) to adjust to their situation and freely take part; the "infiltrators" (the exploiters-tigers) to divide and manipulate the blind. The game dynamic compels each one and each group to reproduce, in effect, their own interpretation of the role of the social class which they are acting.

4.2 Introduction to popular culture

After a brief assessment of the role of culture in processes of change and the differences between liberating and alienating culture, small groups are formed with the objective of "salvaging" popular culture forms from out of their own reality: music, story telling, proverbs, poetry, popular folk medicine, etc.

5. Theatre Itself

It is not until these stages have been covered that the group is ready to understand what Popular Theatre is and the role it must play as an instrument of Popular Education. After this phase, the large group is divided into two "workshops" for

5.1 discussions on popular theatre, its different categories, etc.;

5.2 practical acting exercises;

5.3 preparation of a small work to be performed on a "cultural evening";

5.4 explanation of the collective creation method:

- deciding on the issue to be portrayed (generating nucleus)
- gathering objective data on this issue
- exploring the connotation of this issue - the vital, emotional, subjective aspects evoked by the subject in question
- making a structural analysis of the issue
- conducting additional research
- creating the story line or plot
- selecting characters and dramatic structure for the work.

5.5 creation of a play by the workshop. (In Nicaragua the participants developed a play on "How the peasant farmers participated in the Revolution".)

6. A session on "Theatre Without Spectators"

AFRICAN/CARIBBEAN WORKING GROUP

We do not want a list of various "folk media" and "indigenous structures." We feel it is inappropriate to list folk media, techniques, structures, and personnel, its "variables (positive)" and "constraints (negative)" upon these. They are part and parcel of the totality (political, social, historical, and economic) of the situations in which they occur. In our discussions we have identified a number of issues:

1. a definition of "development" - development for whom?
   - developed countries have achieved and maintained their developed level by exploiting both their own and Third World resources (human and natural)
   - development concepts are inadequately expressed in local languages
   - many "advanced" development models are defined in economic terms only, omitting human, social, and cultural development
   - some aspects of development are given disproportionate emphasis, e.g. population control programmes as compared with health programmes as in India and Bangladesh
   - if western models are not applicable then new definitions of development must be arrived at

2. international relations (funding, multinational corporations, capital outflow, and "brain-drain") + development agencies

(a) Developmentalists only aid stable economies and political systems and labour according to the ways in which this aid is beneficial to donors, e.g. Liberia, Kenya. However, this may not be so in case of war as war can be profitable, e.g. Nigeria.

(b) Collusion between multinational and domestic leaders results in the presence of runaway industries, free trade zones, and the exploitation of the workers in situations where there is inadequate labour legislation. Where governments oppose multinationals, extreme pressure is exerted on those governments, e.g. Jamaica, where the bauxite levy had to be removed when bauxite companies cut back in production.

(c) Some developmental policies are divisive, e.g. master farmer schemes.

(d) There is often a flow of capital out of the country through the local elite, e.g. Jamaica (over the last 8 years)

(e) There is a movement of skilled labour from the Third World to the First World, e.g. Nigerian nurses to Britain.

3. the gulf between a theory of intervention and its practice (including the role of the decision-maker).

By a theory of intervention we mean the introduction of goods, services, personnel, and ideas into the community. Services especially focus on training of personnel in the community, which might include training them elsewhere,

e.g. self-help activities which have been at one stage fostered by decision-makers and acted upon by communities are then undermined by

(a) new policies

(b) inconsistencies in existing policies;

e.g. the radical intellectual who seeks either within formal structures (e.g. religious) or informally (e.g. underground political movements) to impose a rigid class analysis on oppressed groups, is surprised when they don't work as intended.

4. the gulf between a theory of political economy and the active participation of the people

e.g. a blind spot in the current theory of political economy which does not recognize the unpaid work of women in production, and in the reproduction of the labour force;

e.g. the difference between the statements made about a situation by the planners and the politicians and the actual situation in communities.

5. form as particular manifestations of a society and its relation to cultural content. We understand form to include both expressive forms (e.g. plays, dances) and social forms (e.g. age sets, traditional cooperatives). These forms structure social life in

a complex interaction with each other and are inseparable from content. We oppose the idea of abstracting particular forms from their social context and using them arbitrarily for extraneous purposes,

e.g. performing initiation dances at the airport; taking dances out of a religious festival and putting them into dramas for community development; imposing a particular ethnic cult on the entire nation (Tombalbaye and the sarh initiation in Chad as an attempt to promote national cohesion).

We find in our work that we have a need to create appropriate forms to express new content,

e.g. dramatic forms for peasants political awareness in northern Nigeria.

6. the undermining effect of crises in underdeveloped countries. Work is undermined by the adverse effects of abrupt and frequent changes of government, the threat of violent political oppression as well as the daily difficulty of satisfying domestic needs. These crises generate constant demands for immediate action which is fruitless and inhibits evaluation.

Our experiences have revealed a crisis in the nature of the achievement of individual projects. Occasionally the achievement is substantial; generally it is ambiguous; but with increasing frequency it is no achievement at all. It is counter-productive, especially in terms of the lives of the people the projects are most concerned to help.

One analysis of these experiences suggests that the constraints upon the projects are such that a negative result may often be likely. An alternative analysis sees the manifestation of contradiction in general (the opposite result of that which was intended) reflected in the particularity of contradiction in each of the case studies as well as the contradictions inherent in each of the issues (1) to (5) outlined above. Thus:

1. A definition of "development" indicates that in most instances donor countries benefit far more from the aid they give to recipient countries than recipient countries do themselves

2. International funding of development projects in a particular Third World society is undermined by the movement of international capital out of it in such a way that the benefit of the project is obscured.

3. The basis on which groups are organised often provides the means by which the central power effects their destruction.

4. The theory of political economy often actually prevents the people from participating in the process of defining it, but holds them responsible for its implementation and perpetuation.

5. This is riven with contradictions

e. g. (a) a traditional dance/festival/social organisation, etc. may actually consolidate the status quo;

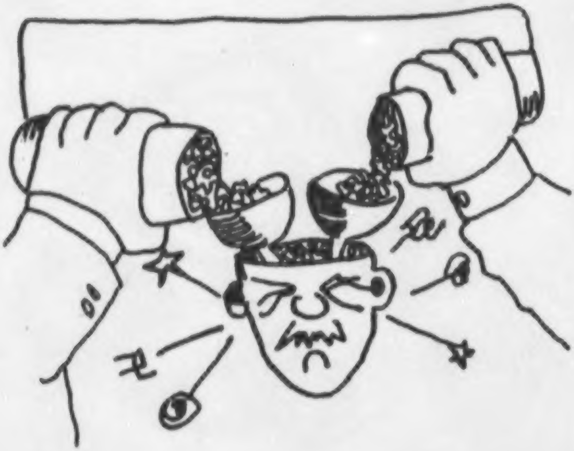
(b) the people may need new media, in addition to existing media, to express the complexity of their contemporary situation, and yet, for example, film and television have such costly means of production that they are only accessible to the elites whose interests vis-à-vis the whole society they can be made to serve;

(c) a popular culture, i.e something for the people, contradicts a people's culture, i.e. something by the people.

6. A particular project is undermined by particular and unrelated crises which it cannot solve.

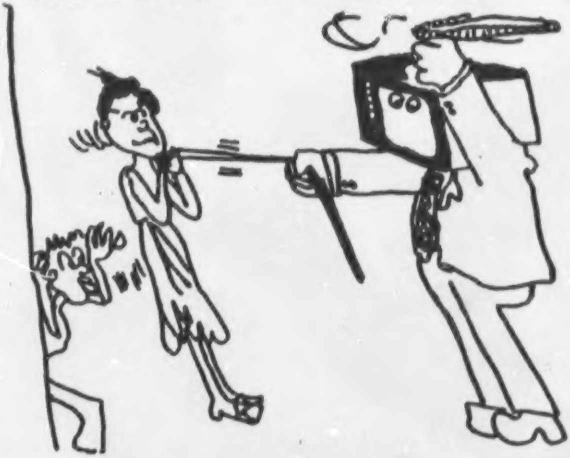
Those in the group who offer an analysis by contradiction would suggest alternative strategies to those currently proposed. Other strategies would be suggested by those for whom the failure of projects can be explained by constraints. But it needs to be stressed that both views shared a common ground in their frank admittance that there were no cut and dried solutions to the problems in both Third World and advanced societies.

ASIAN WORKING GROUP "A"

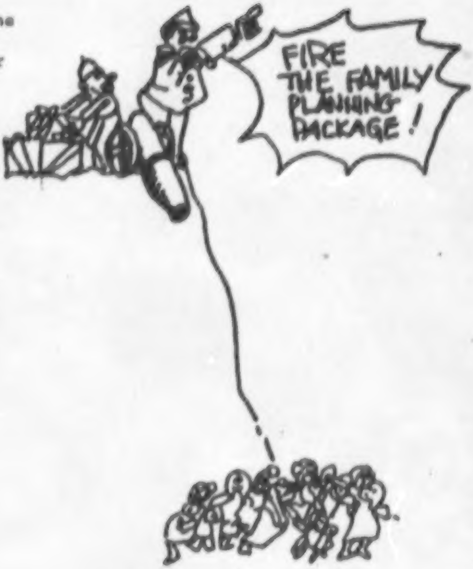


We're not interested in ways of "harnessing" the people's cultural resources for centralized communication of "development" messages. We don't believe in this. It may be the people's cultural forms - the external appearance - but it is not their message nor does it serve their interests. It is simply a more subtle means of external manipulation - their "media" appropriated and used to funnel the ideas of outside agencies into their heads.

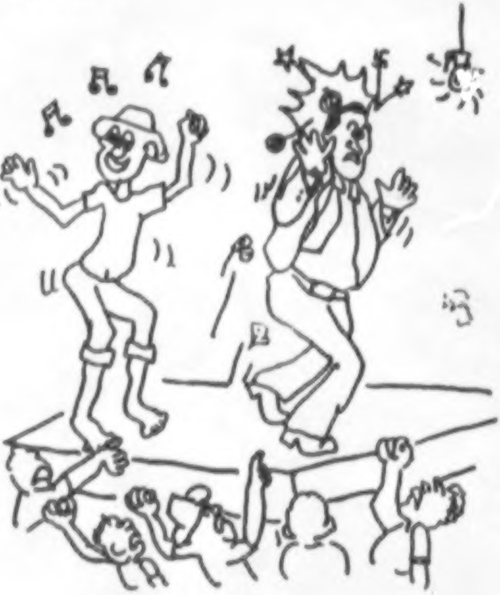
The popular performing arts have operated throughout history as an autonomous form of expression of the popular classes. While overall they tend to reflect dominant class values, they do constitute a form of independent expression, communication, and learning among the popular classes - a major source of identity, popular understanding, and occasionally social criticism and protest. However, the pervasiveness and power of these folk media in influencing the rural masses has attracted the interest of the bureaucratic and bourgeois ruling classes who are looking for fresh ways of legitimating their domination and asserting their control. Without a common language with the popular classes they have attempted to appropriate the people's language and expression to further their interests. For them it is just another resource to be captured and harnessed for their purposes - thus depriving the popular classes of their own means of expression.

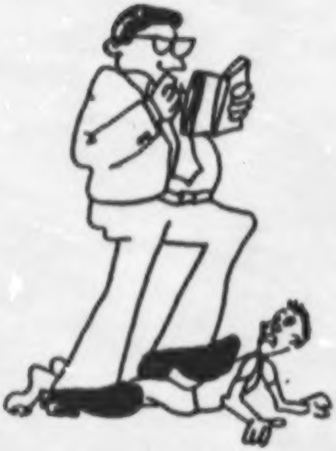


By co-opting the folk arts they remove them from their traditional structure as a form of horizontal communication and convert them into top-down propaganda machinery. The "folk media" simply become another form of mass media - centrally controlled carriers of the development "packages" aimed at providing symptomatic relief but not dealing with the fundamental structural inequality.

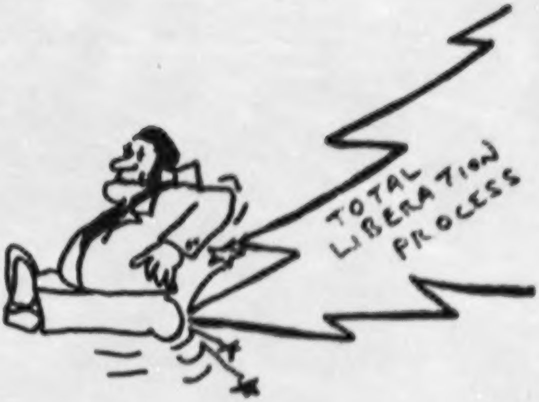

FIRE THE FAMILY PLANNING PACKAGE !

However, the appropriation of the people's media for dominant class propaganda has not happened without a struggle. In various parts of Asia, villagers have resisted the appropriation of their "media" for crude propaganda purposes. In one country folk actors promoting family planning, in support of a coercive sterilization campaign, were physically attacked and in other villages people simply ran away from them when they saw the family planning van. Of course, the most common form of resistance is silence - most villagers simply sit and enjoy the performance, ignoring the propaganda aspects.



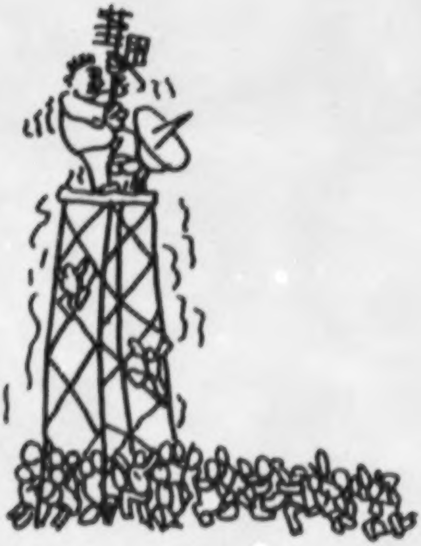


In response to this apparent passivity and unaware that it represents a form of resistance to dominant class propaganda, the development communicator blames the villager. Resistance for him is a negative quality - a factor accounting for the peasants' poverty rather than an effect of and a rational response to the system of domination. The development communicator not only tries to direct attention away from the exploitation of the poor by claiming that poverty is self-inflicting (the result of "traditional ways") but also tries to persuade the poor to accept this explanation and the label of cultural inferiority. (Persuading the "victim" to accept the blame for his exploited situation is one means of dealing with the contradictions and tensions produced by the inequality-producing modernization system.)



The relevance of the indigenous culture concept is not in helping to implement the delivery of technical packages (whose value is problematic for the rural poor), but in identifying an additional means of resisting dominant class indoctrination, building confidence, solidarity, and popular organizations, and struggling against the oppressive structures. "Popular culture" is the true voice of the people, representing their interests, overcoming internalized negative self-images, asserting their aspirations, grievances, and protest, and mobilizing support for [illegible] total liberation process.

Popular culture must be rooted in the organizations and struggles of the popular classes. It must be part of a total transformation process (rather than remaining an isolated form of one-way communication) which builds class consciousness and mass organizations, and challenges the dominant power structure. Only in this way will it remain committed to dismantling the structures of domination, rather than being limited to declarations of protest or social analysis outside an organizational context.



ASIAN WORKING GROUP "B"

INTRODUCTION

We recognize that there are a variety of processes which bring communities into interaction with their wider political, administrative, economic, ecological, and cultural environments. These interactive processes may have both positive and negative impacts upon local communities, including existing social structures and "folk media." They are a fact of life, however, that cannot be ignored. A key consideration of the group, therefore, was how to increase possibilities for "developmental" processes to benefit rather than hurt local communities.

If such "interactive" processes between outside and community groups/individuals is to take place as a "dialogue" then certain elements must be taken into account. There needs to be greater local control of the processes of "interaction" and of community destiny. Helping "traditional" folk media and "indigenous" social structures to evolve can be a means to help restore a balance in relations between communities and other groups/forces. It is hoped that such structures can become a means for 1) expressing the interests, knowledge, and needs of communities, 2) communicating in both a horizontal (inter-community) and vertical (bottom-up) fashion and mediating external messages/programmes in a way that does not undermine existing capacities and structures.

OBJECTIVES AND CONDITIONS FOR USE

Looking at its task from the perspective of "communicator" (regarding traditional media) and "animator" (regarding traditional structures), the group set the following objectives:

1. For work with traditional/folk media

   a) effective development communication

   b) national integration and cultural identity

   c) regional and local cultural identity, with due regard for aesthetic and entertainment values.

2. For work with traditional social structures - promoting development (e.g. social justice, economic justice) through participatory means.

For work with traditional media the following factors need to be considered (in no particular order of priority):

- danger in "overloading"
- world-view sensitivities/value systems
- language, subculture barriers/customs, values
- cultural and aesthetic appropriateness
- subversion or transformation of the form
- determination of flexibility or rigidity
- hierarchy (locus/levels) of control

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- availability of human and financial resources
- capability of extension into mass media

For work with traditional social structures the following factors need to be considered (in no particular order of priority):

- danger in overloading
- value system
- leadership roles and processes
- over-bureaucratisation
- adaptation capacity for technological use
- transformation of form, e.g. "co-optation"
- institutional flexibility and rigidity
- locus of control
- lack of human skills and financial resources
- appropriateness
- accessibility

Strategic Guidelines and Principles Based upon Consideration of Previously Noted Factors

1) To avoid overloading there may possibly be a need to: a) create new roles, leadership and implementation, rules and institutions; and b) balance aesthetics with function.

2) There may be the need to: a) adapt the communication or project task

to the world-view of prevailing value systems; b) guard against inconsistency among forms, value systems and functions; and c) create new forms, channels, structures, and functions.

3) Depending upon determination of the hierarchical locus of control (decision-making, participation), there should be an attempt to decentralise planning and implementation in order to have optimum participation by the people. There should also be creation/strengthening of existing community and sub-community roles and institutions to raise the level of local participation, relevancy, effectiveness, and efficiency; as well as selection of appropriate technology supporting local effective participation.

4) Regarding human and financial resources, it may be necessary to take into account existing as well as needed human and financial resources in order to work effectively with folk media/social structures.

5) Regarding the use of traditional media over the mass media one should
   a) assure the integrity of existing forms,
   b) evolve or fuse new forms, in a dynamic fashion.

Methodological Approach

1. Research into existing conceptions, processes, knowledge, practices

by means of:

- participatory observation
- collection of proverbs
- personal life histories
- interviews, etc.

2. Identification of potential human, institutional, and financial resources from and by the local community

3. Community dialogue on its own future

4. Derivation of plan

5. Implementation

Examples of Application:

A. Wayang Kulit

1.1 Study: a) social position of Dalang; b) Wayang as social/moral commentary; c) Solidarity-making function of Wayang through:

- participatory observation
- interviews
- recording/collection of presentations

2. Selection of Dalangs with potential for conveying new ideas, by talent surveys, interviews, observation

3. Group discussions between the communicators, Dalangs, and key leaders on Wayang as a medium of development communication

4. Pilot projects to meet objectives - Dalangs work as community development agents (including training and evaluation).

B. Dharma Tirta Water Users Association

1. Study: irrigation roles, agricultural production processes, land tenure and power relations, irrigation technologies by means of:
   - participatory observation
   - interviews/life histories
   - documents (records)
   - measuring water
   - group discussion

2. Dialogue between key informants and extension personnel regarding possible adaptation of organizational/technological actions to local institutions, technologies, and needs

3. Local Evolution of Action Plan:
   - key informants work out locally adapted model
   - option is presented and discussed with community
   - leadership/implementing roles are filled
   - pilot areas for technological improvements are established

4. Derive a staged approach to developing technologies and institutional forms relying primarily on local inputs/participation

C. Banjar System

1. Study: role of leaders, origin of Banjar system, and relationships between system and government by means of:
   - participatory observation
   - interviews
   - documents

2. Discussions between Banjar leaders and key informants with field workers to set development issues

3. Extending discussions to include nature of the system

4. Training and evaluation of performance of new Banjar leaders.

SUMMARY OF PLENARY DISCUSSIONS

In principle, the conference participants gave unanimous, but qualified, support to the basic notion that:

> Traditional [institutions] harbour within them a latent dynamism which, when properly respected, can serve as the springboard for modes of development which are more humane than those drawn from outside paradigms. When development builds from indigenous [institutions] it exacts lower social costs and imposes less human suffering and cultural destruction than when it copies outside models.*

This principle of valuing the strength of indigenous culture as a major source of identity and self-confidence was accepted. However, the ways and means of implementing this idea were disputed. One "camp" felt that the Indigenous Culture for Development (ICD) approach should be implemented within a conventional development strategy; the other rejected this view and proposed that "indigenous culture for development" (ICD) only made sense within the context of popular movements in which the people controlled the process.

The latter group, the "popular movement", or structuralist group, rejected the notion of starting with a predetermined "technique" or "approach." They maintained that any analysis or application of culture in development should evolve from an understanding of the history and political economy of the Third World in general and of development in particular. It was felt that an historical perspective would show the development of exploitative relationships and help to clarify current structural inequalities in the Third World.*

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* Goulet, Denis (1980) "Development Experts: The One-Eyed Giants" *World Development* 8 (7-8): 481-490.

The basic question was: who is development serving? The popular movement group viewed conventional development as a process of modernization - of imposing modern habits, techniques, and a servile consciousness on peasants and workers in order to incorporate them into new production processes, patterns of consumption, etc. over which they have no control. The overall effect of development was seen as increasing the power and control of the donor countries and Third World elites while failing to eliminate the impoverishment, exploitation, false consciousness, unemployment, poor health, etc., of the rural masses.

Given this view of conventional development, the popular movement group was skeptical about making any real improvements in the lives of the rural masses merely by slotting a new technique (ICD) into the development process. According to their view, this would only serve to integrate the oppressed into the structures that were exploiting them rather than aid them in breaking out of these oppressive structures. A culture-based strategy would serve the rural masses only if it were used within their own movements where they could define the aspects that would support their interests and decide on the strategy in which popular culture could play a role. While appreciative of this position, those who were more inclined to work within "conventional development" - the "instrumentalist" group - defended a reformist approach, that is, "ideologically" on the outside of the power structure but "tactically" on the inside.

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* An analysis of the historical background and political-economic structures is given in the introduction to the Latin American and African Working Group Reports.

The Structuralists Speak

A fundamental weakness of the Indigenous Culture for Development concept - from the structuralist point of view - lies in its instrumentalist approach. This can be defined as the external manipulation of indigenous culture for ends which ultimately benefit the external agent. In this criticism essentially three things are being addressed:

- the lack of popular control over the process - the programme is externally controlled and manipulated;*
- the appropriation of people's culture to serve ends which are set by outsiders and which work against the popular interest;
- the treatment of indigenous culture as "things" or "tools" which can be extracted from their socio-political context.

"Instrumentalization" means that indigenous institutions are not being valued in terms of their own intrinsic merit nor in terms of how they might serve the interests of the people, but rather in terms of how they can fulfill the objectives of development planners. People's trust in their own indigenous institutions and practices is manipulated in order to "engineer" support for the outsider's project or programme. One danger of this, of course, is that as people see their culture being appropriated for technocratic ends they will either lose faith in their own institutions or resist the instrumentalization of their culture.

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* In principle ICD sounds "bottom-up" since it is meant to build on people's own cultural institutions and structures. However, in practice their institutions are co-opted and used within a development project over which they have little or no control.

__Pseudo-Participation__ Structuralists focused a good deal of discussion on the above contradiction. In principle, ICD appears to be a means of increasing people's control over the development process; in practice, however, it results in only token participation. People are "involved" in the initiatives of the development agencies rather than in programmes in which they take the initiative and have the control.

The use of folk media may provide the best example: while performances utilize indigenous performers, indigenous cultural forms, and a good deal of popular content, the central messages remain those of the outside development agencies. The whole exercise is essentially one of persuasion rather than dialogue. There is no attempt to help the oppressed develop a critical perspective on their situation and organise to defend their interests. Performers and audiences are rarely involved in selecting and shaping the messages, in discussing the performances, or in linking the performances with organization and collective action. Thus, without a change in the overall structure, folk media operates as mass media does -- a top-down, centrally controlled, social engineering approach to development.

KAP-Gap Mentality* A common feature of ICD work and development work in general was seen to be a "KAP-gap mentality" or the assumption that the primary constraint on development was knowledge and skills rather than structural inequality.** This was evident in one of the seminar papers which listed development problems as those of "drinking, illiteracy, superstition, uncontrolled family, malnutrition, and insanitation". No mention of landlessness or low wages or unemployment or victimization - the poor could pull themselves up by their proverbial bootstraps if they could only learn to read, cook better meals, dig latrines, and break their bad drinking and procreative habits. This "blaming the victim" interpretation of rural poverty provides a rationalization for the social engineering approach to ICD: since the poor are 'ignorant' and have 'bad traditional habits', any approach is valid in persuading them to change their ways even if this means manipulating their culture.

Resistance - A Conservative or Positive Response to Development? The KAP-gap mentality was also demonstrated in the instrumentalists' analysis of peasant resistance to development. Instead of regarding resistance as a positive sign indicating increased critical consciousness and real awareness of some of the negative effects of development, it was viewed as representing conservative behaviour -

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* KAP is an abbreviation for "Knowledge-Attitude-Practice", the label for a commonly used form of pre-programme research.

** Where structural inequality is recognised - eg. the Indian Song and Drama Division's dramas on untouchability, the solution to the exploitation and victimisation of the Harijans is presented as a change of heart by the landlord rather than their organization to demand just treatment.

> "If ignored, such indigenous communication systems can transmit messages which oppose and undermine development programmes. For example, in India, Pakistan, and Indonesia such traditional communication channels have, in the past, frequently carried negative rumours about the side-effects of family planning methods, sometimes leading to the outright rejection of the contraceptives being introduced."

On the other hand, popular resistance to forced sterilization campaigns or family planning programmes which do not encompass structural reforms might be viewed as a sign of true development, i.e., the poor's growing awareness of what serves or works against their interests and their efforts to defend themselves against arbitrarily imposed "development."

The Moneylender The idea of utilising the village moneylender as a family planning promoter was the best example of the contradictions in the ICD approach. It is clearly coercive - a member of the village power structure who has tremendous control over the lives of landless labourers and marginal peasants is charged with the task of "motivating" them to accept family planning, if not sterilization. This could never be construed as "participation" or "dialogue"!

The moneylender proposal exemplifies the technicism in the ICD approach - engineering consent through whatever means are available without questioning the social purposes or expected effect of the project. Any indigenous institution can be utilized, even if it is totally reactionary, as long as it furthers the interests of the developers.

This proposal marked the huge gap in the seminar between a) those who were engaged at home in an all-out war against the moneylender and b) those who were suggesting the moneylender be given control over another aspect of people's lives - as an efficient means of achieving population control.

No Change in the Over-all Development Strategy. One fundamental flaw in ICD is its apparent acceptance of the development status quo. Non-indigenous technologies are replaced with indigenous technologies, but the overall development process remains the same - essentially a modernization exercise with technologies being pumped in from the outside with little popular control over the whole process.

Folk Culture: A Process Not a Thing. One symptom of instrumentalism and technicism in ICD is the reification of folk culture as a thing. Its theorists and practitioners keep talking about ICD as if it is a neutral "technique" or "instrument" which can with certain technical adjustments be plugged into various situations -- with no consideration of the social context, social purposes, or social effects.

UNESCO and IPPF for example developed a totally technicist theory of folk media which permitted no discussion of the development goals or processes in which folk media were to be used - only the choice of which forms would be "flexible" enough to allow modern messages. Their approach was essentially to make lists of suitable folk media forms. Those folk performers which were sufficiently "flexible" would become the entertaining, familiar, but *empty* vessels into which the ideas of the technocrats would be poured.

Viewing folk culture as a "thing" obscures the deeply political character of development. It allows developers to define their job as one of choosing strategies according to their technical efficiency -- which media or technologies work better -- rather than one of critically assessing the whole development process -- its aims, methods, effects, and the fundamental problems of the rural population. Development then becomes a business of technique rather than a highly complex political, economic and social process.

Political Economy of ICD The above contradictions made many participants cynical about the intentions of ICD promoters.* They suggested that development had become so crisis-ridden that development agencies needed new ways of sugar-coating the pill; discontent in the Third World necessitated new,

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* For example, in responding to a question about a World Bank agricultural scheme, one farmer said: "If you see an intelligent man running in broad daylight through his rice field, when it is ready for harvest, destroying everything in its path, he is either chasing something or is himself being chased." In other words, the World Bank project is designed not for the benefit of the farmers but for that of the development planners. The latter are either running after the rural communities trying to exploit them or are being chased by the pressures of the international terms of trade into producing more and more foreign exchange. See Johnny and Richards' paper.

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more subtle means of engineering consent, stifling criticism, and curbing popular protest. Others argued that with the increasing penetration of Third World agricultural economies multi-nationals needed more direct control over rural production - and this, in turn, required new ways and techniques of reaching and directing the rural population. ICD was thus viewed as part of a larger strategy to incorporate the rural poor into new structures over which they had no control. Instead of being marginalized, ignored, or left alone, they were to be tied more closely to the system.

However, the structuralists did not accept the view that peasants are acquiescent, fatalistic, apathetic or passive in the face of this domination. They attempted to dispel the concept of peasant ignorance and cited many examples of peasant resistance to "development" projects which had serious side-effects.

From "Indigenous" to "Popular" Culture

The structuralists, having critiqued the ICD idea in theory and practice, then proposed an alternative strategy, one based on "popular culture". According to this approach, the people themselves would define their culture - what aspects need to be enhanced and preserved and what aspects (which perpetuate oppressive structures) need to be overcome. Unlike the ICD approach the popular culture approach would work with and through the popular organizations, enabling people to critically evaluate and consciously shape their own culture, revealing and transforming class and gender contradictions in the process.

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The Instrumentalists Reply

Lest the impression be given that the seminar's discussions consisted of structuralists lecturing instrumentalists about the need for structural change ignited by people's movements, let us report on some of the counter arguments which were raised.

The structuralists were accused of being naive and overly romantic about the nature of power and social change. Did they really believe that popular movements would be allowed to emerge and control resources (their own culture being one such resource) in ways that would threaten the existing powers without those very powers destroying them? Were they not as patronizing as the instrumentalists in thinking that popular movements could, indeed, not co-opt government programs to serve popular ends pragmatically? What did they propose to guard against exploitation among the poor themselves -- either before or after their rise to power? Did they, in fact, have evidence that a classless society was possible? Ironically, most of the more vocal structuralists came from class and ethnic backgrounds which denied the very roles they played as advocates of the oppressed masses. Could the poor they purported to liberate implicitly trust them or were they not equally guilty of instrumentalism or manipulation in their approach?

Was the true conclusion of the seminar that none of those participating, either "instrumentalists" or "structuralists," truly represented the people and themes discussed? Was the ultimate solution not a call for change from the outside but rather a plea for leaving people alone to solve their problems? Is even this conclusion unrealistic? If Quechua Indians are sitting on copper mines or Kalahari Bushmen on veins of diamonds, is it not wishful thinking to suppose that those seeking control of those resources will leave them alone? Is there not a real possibility that if people do not make decisions for themselves others will make decisions for them?

Why must instrumentalism be seen as a one-way path - the outsider exploiting the insider; the rich exploiting the poor; etc? Finally, is it not possible for indigenous or popular culture to be used by outside forces for good ends? Instrumentalists would maintain that it can, and that structuralists may, in fact, be questioning the message not the medium.

Instrumentalists maintain that ICD can indeed offer a viable strategy for eliminating widespread poverty and mitigating human suffering though it may not directly deal with class struggle. If this is true, then the issue of appropriate ICD application might be better viewed holistically -- as one which asks what poverty, and its elimination, is all about.

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